

K. Rothwell
A
Divine Discovery
OF
SINCERITY,

According to its proper
and peculiar nature : very pro-
fitable for all sorts of persons
to peruse.

First preached, and now
published, for the good of Gods
Church in generall.

By NICHOLAS LOCKYER
Master of Arts.

PSAL. 78. 37.

*For their heart was not right with him; nei-
ther were they stedfast in his covenant.*

PSAL: 119. 80.

*Let my heart be sound in thy Statutes, that I
be not ashamed.*

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TO THE
VERTUOUS LADY,
BRIDGET LYDDELL,
My much Honoured AUNT:
Grace and peace be multiplied
by Jesus Christ.



Adam: 'Tis Gods command to Abraham, and in him to us, That we should walk before him, and be perfect. Absolute perfection God doth not there mean, but intentionall: which is, when we desire and endeavour with David, to have all our wayes conformed to all Gods Statutes. Intentionall perfection is no other but sincere walking; and what this is, this Tract now humbly presented to your Ladiship. will plainly make known unto you. A sincere heart, is a heart after Gods own heart; which of all Jewels which the Gentry and Nobilitie weare, is the most resplendent, in the breast and bosome to be worn. The richest Jeweller, Christ, proffers this pearle of great price, without money, or
A 2 money-

The Epistle Dedicatorie.

money-worth, and the multitude sleight it, as a low prised thing, not worth the seeking after; but your Ladiship hath otherwise learned Christ: Many things, Madam, may be convenient, but one is necessary; to wit, a sincere heart. The acquiring of this, is the worke of our whole life: the setting forth of this, in its nature and lustre, is the work of Christs Ministers; the least and unworthiest of all which, is your Nephew, which hath in this tract, done something to this effect; from which, if your Ladiship shall reap an increase of good, to that sweet stock you have, I shall humbly blesse God. To whose blessing I commend your selfe and worthy Family; this work, and the unworthy Author,

Your much obliged Nephew,

NICHOLAS LOCKYER.

To



To the Christian Reader.



Christian Reader, Two things should be the principall matter of thy study; Christ, and thine owne heart. The latter, to know thine owne misery; the former, to know Gods rich mercy, and how thou mayst be made partaker of it. So deceitfull is the heart of man naturally, that he *thinkes himselfe rich, and increased in goods*, and knowes not that he is *poore, and blind, miserable, wretched, and naked*. And untill this deceit and unsoundnesse be discovered, men will never seeke out for Christ, which is that *Gold tried in the fire*, which indeed makes poore man rich; and that *white rayment*, *John* speaks of, which indeed makes naked man comely, and covers all his deformity, from the all-seeing eye of him that is perfect purity, The true knowledge of thine owne heart, this little Tract will helpe thee to, by the blessing of God; if thou seriously peruse it,

To the Reader.

it, and humbly seeke to him, who is the
searcher and discoverer of all hearts, to go
along with thee, in the reading of it. Which
when once thou hast gotten, thou wilt be
capable of the saving knowledge of Christ,
and restless till thou hast obtained it.
And this when acquired, will resolve thy
doubting, comfort thy mourning, and sta-
blish thy staggering soule: 'twill give thee
peace and joy unspeakable here, and bring
thee to glory and joy incomprehensible
hereafter. To which, the Lord bring thee,
and me.

Nicholas Lockyer.

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The first Sermon.

2 COR. I. 12.

For our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our Conscience, that in simplicitie and godly sinceritie, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-wards.



O grace, how glorious soever in the eye of man, goes for good weight in the eye of God. without sincerity: The greatest man in the world, weighed in the Balance of the Sanctuary, without this, will be accounted too light for Heaven. 'Tis a very needfull subject then, that this Text plainly proffers to our consideration. And as excellent in it selfe, as needfull to us, is sincerity. 'Tis the precious extract, of all graces; and to call this a grace, is too little. 'Tis that which gives to every grace its due lustre, in the eye of God; and to call any thing a grace in man, without this, is too much. 'Tis the glory of all graces, as the Sun is the glory of all the Stars: 'tis the vitall blood of the soule; which that it may run in the veins of you all, unto your eternall happinesse, have

I chosen this Text to insist on : *For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, &c.*

No condition is truly joyous without, and no condition is truly dolorous with sincerity. If a man be never so rich, never so honourable, yet if not withall sincere, there is no true joy in such a man : he laughs, but in the midst of laughter, his heart is oft-times sad, and his conscience spoils his sport. On the other hand ; if a man be never so poor, never so much oppressed, which is the deadliest, and the most opposite enemy to joy of all, yet if that man be sincere, his heart may be as full of joy, as it can hold, for all this ; as you may see in these words read, *For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicitie and godly sincerity, &c.* Paul and Timothy have been sincere servants of Jesus Christ, for the good of his Church amongst the Gentiles, and in this they had transcendent comfort in the midst of all the misery they met withall.

'Tis not misery, but sinne, that robs the soule of joy. Let a man labour to live sincerely, and then let men and devils do what they can, or will, such a man shall never be bereft of joy : he shall have joy in poverty, joy in disgrace, he shall have joy in prison, as much as in liberty, and much more ; so had Paul and Timothy, which made them thus bravely break out in the midst of misery, *For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our Conscience,*

science, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the World, and more abundantly to you-wards.

These words are the Apostles divine narration, of their happy condition in misery. And they containe two principall things, useful for all men to be wel acquainted withall: to wit, true joy, and the true ground of this desirable grace; which the Apostle here makes, sincerity, and that testimony which Conscience gives thereof to the Soule. For our rejoycing is this, what? why, the testimony of our Conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, that is, in integrity and uprightnesse, not with fleshly wisdom, that is, not with humane policy and eloquence, as men proudly depending upon our owne parts, and subtilly seeking our owne ends, in our preaching and living, but by the grace of God, *ἀπὸ χάριτος Θεοῦ*, but in the grace of God, saith the originall: that is, in the strength and assistance of God, which is a speciall fruit of his grace and favour, we have had our conversation in the World; that is, we have carried our selves in life and doctrine amongst all, and more abundantly to you-wards; *καὶ περισσώτερον ὑμῖν*, but especially amongst you, saith the Originall.

Divine joy is set forth unto us in this Text, according to its proper subject, and according to its proper rise. The proper subject of divine joy, is the righteous man, as the Psalmist frequently notes: And this man is made the subject of Divine joy in my Text, For [our] rejoycing, &c. that is, we which are sincere: hypocrites have nothing to doe with

joy is suiteable to their spirits; deceitfull; that which wil flee from them, and not stand by them, as this joy of the Apostles did, when trials come.

For our ἡμῶν, boasting it this, so the word in the originall strictly taken, signifies. Divine boasting, notes Divine joy in the conspicuous act thereof: It notes joy, as it hath strongly seized upon the heart within; and it notes joy, as it hath strongly seized upon the tongue, and face, and hands, without: so that it is all one as if the Apostle had said, *The cause of our strong and open rejoicing is this.*

What? That they had made provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts of it: No divine joy hath not such a Diabolicall rise: The proper rise of divine joy, is the testimony of a pure Conscience, concerning the uprightness of a mans conversation; and this was the rise of Pauls and Timothies joy, in affliction. *Their Conscience bore witness with them, that in integrity and uprightness; not in flattery, policy, and subtilty, they had preached and lived amongst all men, as those that depended upon the strength and ayd of Christ in every thing, and not upon any abilities of their owne, though they were endowed with greater humane gifts then any the false Apostles had. Thus they carried themselves in a plain, downright, faithfull way, where ever they came to publish the Gospel of Christ, but especially amongst the Corinthians.* To other Churches Paul used a more insinuating way of preaching; but to this Church of the Corinthians, all plainnesse, & homeliness; sparing no expressions, that might fully

see

set forth their wicked wayes, and throughly awaken their drowfie consciences, as hereafter in due place (God willing) I shall shew unto you. The Church of the *Corinthians*, of all the Churches which *Paul* or other of the Apostles had planted, was most loose every way; and therefore *Paul* did not content himselfe with hints and overtures; and wrap up bitter Pills, in sugred glib-go-down words; but with all godly boldnesse and plainnesse, beyond what hee did to other Churches, hee reprov'd them for, and upbraided them with their wickednesse; which is that he would have us apprehend, in this last clause of my Text. *But specially amongst you.*

Several propositions are to be noted in this verse thus opened: as first this, *That in simplicity and godly sincerity, we ought to have our conversation in this world.* This truth is plainly intimated by the Apostle; for hee joyced that he had so ordered his conversation, as Christ required; not flattering and fauning, with fleshly wisdom in his preaching, to sooth men in their sinnes, and to bring about his own ends, as false apostles did; but faithfully reprov'g every vice, sparing no plainnesse of speech, to such as otherwise would not be brought to see and bewaile their sinner. Whether this way of preaching were pleasing or displeasing to the world; whether it brought honour or disgrace to himselfe from the world, hee heeded not, whilst he knew 'twas suitable walking to the Will of God.

Doctrine deduc'd.

Doct. 2.

A second proposition is this, *That conscience can give testimony, concerning the simplicity, or hypocrisie of a mans conversation.* This truth is also plainly intimated, in that the Apostle makes the testimony of his conscience concerning his Integrity, the ground of his joy. *For our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, (which had bin hypocriticall) but by the grace of God we have had our conversation in the world, &c.*

Doct. 3.

A third proposition is this, *That consciouesnesse to our selves, of the simplicity and sincerity of our conversation, will yeeld us joy in the midst of troubles.* This truth is also intimated by the Apostle; for in the midst of all his troubles and miseries, he rejoyced in this, that his conscience could bear witnesse with him, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, he had ordered his conversation in this world.

Doct. 4.

A fourth and last point observable is this, *That there be speciall times and occasions, for the declaration of sincerity, which ought to be observed, and answerably to declare and shew our selves in our places.* This truth is also plainly set forth unto us in the Text; for Paul and Timothy thus carried themselves in their places toward the Church of Corinth, which became very openly and grossely wicked, *whereof we are not ashamed, but specially amongst you.* They had declared sinceritie and uprightnesse in their ministry, amongst other Churches. by a faithfull reproving of them, at occasion required, but no Church so scandalously carried themselves as this Church, and therefore

this

this Church needed, above all others, to be more thoroughly dealt withall; which the Apostles, as sincere men considered, and answerably carried themselves.

I begin with the first of these, to wit, *That in simplicity and godly sincerity, we ought to have our conversation in this world.* Paul could not justly have joyed in the simplicity and sincerity of his conversation, had not his conscience told him, that so to walk, was to walk as Christ had commanded him. Christs charge to his Apostles (when he sent them forth) was, that they should be *ἀπλῶν ὡς τὰς περιστερὰς*, *Simple as Doves*: that they should teach men to observe all things whatsoever he commanded them: now, Pauls conscience and *Timothies* both, bore witness with them, that thus they had walked in their places, and this made them to rejoyce in the midst of all the hardship they underwent. As they had this charge in particular, so they had this charge in generall, with all the seed of *Abraham*, in these words, *Walke before me, and be thou perfect*: that is, sincere, *Gen. 17. 1.* So that they had broken a double bond, had they not simply and sincerely ordered their conversation.

Simplicity] is a terme which sometimes notes folly. *How long ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity, and fools hate knowledge?* *Prov. 1. 22.* In my Text, this terme is opposed to double mindednesse, and such men have usually more wit then they use well; and signifies an unity and identity between the heart and tongue; what the tongue sayes, the heart really intends: and so taken,

Doct. 1.

*Mat. 10.
16.
Mat. 28.
10.*

it sounds the same with sincerity, and therefore coupled together hereby the Apostle, as *Synonyma's, contermini*, words of the same signification.

Sincerity is either *Morall*, or *Theologicall*. *Morall* sincerity, I call such a qualification of spirit, as leads a man to doe to others as he would be done to himselfe. "A rectitude of spirit in relation to men. Such a sincere man ('tis probable) was *Abimelech* King of *Gerar*. He tooke *Abrahams* wife unto him, she being very beautifull, but this hee would have done, had hee knowne her to have beene *Abrahams* wife; for *Abraham* had told him, that she was his sister; and therefore God bore witnesse with *Abimelech* concerning his integrity. *In the integrity of my heart, and innocency of my hands have I done this*, said *Abimelech*; and God said unto him, *Yea I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart*, *Gen. 20. 6*. Such a sincere man was that young man which came to our Saviour, and told him, that hee had kept all the *Commandments from his youth*. He gave to every man his due, and lived orderly amongst his neighbours, and therefore he judged himselfe as good as needed to be.

Morall sincerity, is close hypocrisie. *Morall* sincerity is like some counterfeite pearle, which make a faire shew to looke upon, but deceive both buyer and beholder. Multitudes think that because their spirits are so over-ruled by God, that they do no injury to man, that therefore they are endowed with *godly sincerity*, *ἐλαφρὴν συνείδησιν*, *the*

the sincerity of God, as the originall here calls it. The truth is, Morall sincerity, is the sincerity of God too; for 'tis his restraining corrupt man, which otherwise would bee as prophane towards man outwardly, as he is towards God inwardly. *I withheld thee from sinning against me,* said God to *Abimilech*, Gen. 20. 6. A morall sincere man, is but an out-side holy man, but observes it not; and therefore (I think) called by some, A close hypocrite. But this is not that sincerity of God, which my Text speaks of.

Godly sincerity, or the sincerity of God, which my Text speaks of, is a speciall work of God upon the soule of man, making him laborious, to walke according to Gods Will in all things, that God may have all the glory due to his Name.

First, I say, that godly sincerity is a speciall worke of God upon the soule, &c. This Genus, the Apostle confirms in my Text, calling sincerity *ἡλικία Θεοῦ*, the sincerity of God. That is, that sincerity which is a after speciall manner wrought of God in the heart of man. So likewise elsewhere the Apostle solemnly prayes for sincerity in the behalfe of the *Philippians*; which plainly shews, that sincerity is not *Quid proveniens à natura*, a thing growing naturally in man. And this I pray (saith the Apostle) that your love may abound, that you may approve the things that are excellent, that ye may be sincere, and without offence unto the day of Christ, Phil. 1. 9, 10.

The heart of man naturally is deceitfull, not sincere; desperately wicked, not truly good; more opposite to sincerity then to any thing;

Genus in
Definiti-
one.

as things corrupted, carry a greater dissimilitude to what they were, then to any thing else which they never were. The Devill is more opposite to the goodnesse of an Angell which once hee had, then to any lower good, which hee never formally had; which is a torment that lies upon him, as a part of his judgement. *God made man upright*: that is, for qualification suitable to his owne will; apt and able to walke in all holy wayes blamelesse. Man voluntarily losing this, as the Devill did that, through pride, is with the Devill, more dislike to himselfe, then to any thing below himselfe: he is more like a Lion, a Leopard, a Tyger, a Beare, a Wolfe, a Serpent, a Toad, a Stocke, a Stone, then man in innocency; and more violently opposite to uprightnesse and justice naturally, then any creature below him is: and therefore is the heart of man naturally said to bee deceitfull [*above all things*] and desperately wicked [*beyond knowledge*] *Ier. 17. 9.* which is enough to demonstrate, that godly sincerity cannot be *a natura*; and if not of nature, then of grace. There is no fallacy in this disjunctive argument.

*Cumulus
accidentum
in de
finitione.*

*Prov. 10
16.*

Making a man laborious, &c.] that is, constantly laborious, willingly laborious, and laborious according to all his strength. First, sincerity is such a speciall worke of God upon the Soule, that it makes a man *laborious* to doe the Will of God. *Salomon* confirms this where he saith, *That the labour of the righteous tendeth to life*: that is, to a holy and happy life. A sincere man is laborious to lead a holy life, to order

der all his conversation, according to the holy rule of Gods Word. That thus this clause is to be interpreted, I collect from the following clause, which by way of *Antithesis*, the wise man delivereth. *The fruit of the wicked to sin.* The whole proverbe put together, hath the force of a comparison in it. As the labour of the wicked tends to sinne; so the labour of the righteous tends to holinesse, and so consequently to happinesse. Sinceritie hath more in it, then an applauding of holinesse: *I thou art more righteous then I: Thy going in and out before mee in the host is good.* Sincerity hath more in it then a lazie wishing for holinesse. *O that I might die the death of the righteous, and that my last end might be like his!* Sincerity is such a speciall worke of God upon the soule, that it sets a man a labouring for holinesse. *Wherefore we labour, that is, we which are sincere, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him,* 2 Cor. 5. 9. that is, that wee may live holily, and die happily; whereas all other men labour after vanities, and so consequently their labours tend to sin, and so to death, as *Solomon* saith.

Sincerity is such a speciall work of God upon the soule, that it makes a man see a transcendent worth in the will of God; and worth begets love, as the Sunne draws forth the spring; and love begets labour, to attain the thing beloved. *Thy testimonies are wonderfull: therefore doth my soule keep them,* Psal. 119. 129. *Thy testimonies are wonderfull:* that is, wonderfull righteous, just, and equall; and wonderfull sweet; sweeter

then the honey, or the honey-combe: *therefore doth my soul keep them.* That is, therefore doth my soul labour to keep them. As if he had said, I see such a transcendent purity and taste, such a transcendent sweetnesse in the testimonies of God, that my soul cannot chuse, but labour to walk in them.

Sincerity makes a man [*laborious*] to doe the Will of God, you see: that is, it makes a man *constantly, willingly,* and according to *all his strength,* industrious. That sincerity is such a speciall work of God upon the soule, that makes a man [*constantly*] laborious to doe the Will of God, *Paul* in whom sincerity was, confirms. *And herein doe I exercise my selfe, to have* [*alwayes*] *a conscience void of offence, towards God and towards man.* *Acts 24. 16.* *Pauls* industry was, to obey the Will of God to-day, and the like next day, and so he continued laborious every day, that he might have [*alwayes*] a conscience void of offence, towards God and man. *The high way of the upright is to depart from evil,* saith *Solomon,* *Prov. 16. v. 17.* that is, this is their daily soul-labour, the continuall road in which they travell, to be rid of sin, and to depart from that more and more. An hypocrite stumbles into this path of piety now and then, but this is not his high way, his usuall and daily road; he quickly gets out of it again: to this unconstant cloud (I conceive) *Solomon* opposeth the upright man, in the place forecited, who makes it a beaten high way; hee is so constant in his endeavours to doe good, and to depart from evil, *I have enclined my heart, to perform thy statutes* [*alway*] [*even*

unto the end.] *Psal.* 119. 112. Sincerity, is such a speciall worke of God upon the soule, that it inclines the heart to labour *alwaies*, to obey the will of God, which naturally is quickly weary of wel-doing. As the touch of a Loadstone, makes the needle to have a constant and restlesse inclination to the North: so godly sincerity, which I may call Gods secret touch of the heart, it makes the soule of man, have a constant and restlesse inclination, to walke in Gods waies; and his constant inclination makes him constantly laborious, to doe according to his daily desire. Sincerity is such a speciall worke of God upon the soule, that it makes a man to set God [*alwaies*] before him, and to doe all things daily as in his presence. *I have set the Lord [alwaies] before me, saith David, Psal.* 16. 8. *For we are not as many, which corrupt the Word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God [in the sight of God] speake we in Christ, 2 Cor. 2. 17.* This is the genuine nature of sincerity, to make a man to set God [*alwaies*] before his eyes, and to doe things, as beholding him that is invisible.

Sincerity is such a speciall worke of God upon the soule, that it makes a man so constant in his endeavours to doe the Will of God, that no opposition can make him to cease this labour. *The proud have had me greatly in derision: yet have I not declined from thy Law, Psal.* 119. 51. Proud wretches scoff'd at holy waies, and *Dauids* holy endeavours to walke in them: nay, they did this vehemently; and yet *David* (being sincere) held on his holy course still. Nay, elsewhere he tels us, that they had almost consumed him upon earth, such was their malice

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83.

malice against him, *and yet he forsooke not his holy industry to obey Gods precepts, Psal. 119.87.* Neither persecution of tongue nor hand, though never so vehement, can make a man, in whose heart godly sincerity is, to cease his industry to obey God, and walke in his waies. Hang him up as a *bottle in the smoake*, and yet he will not forget this worke he is about, to wit, to obey Gods statutes. Strong trials may make a sincere heart give backe for a time, so farre may they prevaile upon the remaining unsoundnesse, that is in the heart of man naturally, when at best; but they never prevaile, to make a sincere heart give off his labour to obey God.

That sincerity is such a speciall worke of God upon the soule, as makes a man *willingly laborious* to doe the Will of God, is hinted to us by that expression of the Prophet, *Isai. 1.19. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eate the good of the Land.* Sincere men, are such as shall eate the good of that holy Land, which *Canaan* typified: So that this being laid downe, as an undeniable conclusion; we see that sincerity is such a speciall worke of God upon the soule, as toucheth the will, and so makes a man not onely obedient, but *willing and obedient*, without which there is no *eating*, that is, enjoying of that holy Land, which *Canaan* typified. 'Twas that which God did much looke at, and stand upon, under the old covenant, that in all their sacrificall services (which were of cost and charge) they should be willing and chearfull, or else God would not account their obedience sincere: and therefore saith *David* an upright man,
and

and that God and all his people might see his uprightness, in this chargeable way of serving God, *I will [freely] sacrifice unto thee, I will praise thy Name, O Lord. for it is good. I will freely sacrifice: that is, willingly, chearfully, bountifully, &c.* If willingnesse were so much lookt at, in their chargeable services under the old covenant, as a symptome of sincerity, much more doubtlesse doth God looke at it now, in his services of the new covenant, which are without expence; and answerably doubtlesse is it with sincere men for the generall, under the Gospel: to wit, more willing and chearfull in their services to God, then they under the Law were.

A sincere man doth not labour to serve God, of constraint, and by compulsion, as some servants, and all beasts, serve us: but of a ready mind, as one that hath chosen this way of life above all others, to walke in: *I have chosen the way of truth; thy judgements have I laid before me, P'sal. 119. 30.* Sincerity is such a speciall worke of God upon the soule, that it makes a man see a greater beauty in Gods waies, then in any waies besides; and to taste a greater sweetnesse in these waies, then in any waies: and hence the soule is raised voluntarily and freely, to choose these waies to walke in, before all others. Sincerity is such a speciall work of God upon the soule, that it makes a man see the word of God to be the straightest and truest rule of all others, to walke by; and therefore voluntarily chooseth this, before others, to lay before him, as a rule to walk by, *I have chosen the way [of truth:] thy judgements have I laid before me.*

That

That sincerity is such a speciall Worke of God upon the soule, as makes a man laborious [according to all his strength] to doe the will of God, we may lively see by some notable expressions of Paul. *I presse towards the marke, for the price of the high Calling, of God, in Christ Jesus.* Phil. 3. 14. *διωκῶ ἕως τῆς κοίτης, I pursue, I hunt,* saith the originall. Pursuing and hunting are actions wherein the creature puts forth all his strength, to get what they desire. Sincerity sets a man to hit the white; and there must be all possible care in leveling, to doe this. Sincerity sets the soule to win the prise; (*for the price of the high calling*) now a man that would winne the prise, must not runne lazily, but he must *nervis cunctis laborare*, runne with all his strength. So you have another notable expression, *Phil. 3. 13. Forgetting those things which are behind, and [reaching forth] unto those things which are before, ἐνδιωκόμενοι* extending, contending, stretching forth, reaching forth; which are all termes (you know) which note the whole strength put forth, to acquire a thing. Sincerity is such a speciall worke of God upon the soule, as makes a man to set before him no other rule, but perfection, to walke by; and then it makes a man labour with all his strength, to walke exactly according to this rule; *ἵνα μὴ, If by any meanes he may attaine unto the resurrection of the dead.* That is, to doe the Will of God on earth, as men risen from the dead, and living with Christ in Heaven, doe. Hitherto tend also those expressions in Scripture, of serving God with the [whole heart] *with my whole heart have I sought*

there

thee, O let me not wander from thy Commandements, Psal. 119.10. I labour with all my strength to walke in thy waies, and when I put forth mine own strength to the uttermost, then I deny all in my selfe, and wholly depend upon thy strength, to be made victorious, against the many temptations I meet withall; And whilst through thine ayd, I go in the direct way, to obtain grace, and victory against corruptions, let me not O Lord be frustrated, and so lie open still, to be drawn aside from thy Commandements.

Godly sincerity makes a man observe the divine rule, in labouring to do the will of God. Now the divine rule in this point, is, that we should labour with *all our strength*. Thou hast commanded us to keepe thy precepts [diligently] Psalm. 119.4. Thou hast commanded us to [keepe] that is, thou hast commanded us to labour to keepe: but how to labour? lazily? no: *diligently*. *אדא* *valde*, *very much*, *earnestly*, *vehemently*, saith the originall; That is, with all our strength. Now sincerity is such a speciall worke of God upon the soule, that it makes a man put this precept before him, in all his labourings to doe the Will of God: and so he labours *very much*, *earnestly*, *vehemently*, that is, with all his strength, to do the will of God.

That sincerity makes a man laborious with all his might [to doe all Gods Will] the Scripture abundantly proveth. God himselfe describing a sincere man to the Divell, confirmeth this. And the Lord said unto Satan, hast thou not considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect

perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evill? That is, one that eyeth all my will, and escheweth all that is contrary thereunto. That thus these words are to be interpreted, is manifested by *Jobs* own language, when he would maintaine his sincerity to God, the searcher of all hearts. *Let me be weighed in an even ballance, that God may know mine integrity.* Why? what is thy integrity *Job*, upon which thou dost so much stand? Why 'tis this: I have laboured to obey all Gods Will. If my steps have turned out of the way, and my heart walked after mine eyes, and if [any blot] hath cleaved to my hand, &c. *Job 31.* If I have walked with vanity, or if my foot hath hastened to deceit; and so he goes on largely, driving things to this issue, that if he had not been laborious, to walke according to all Gods Will, he would yeeld to what his adversaries charged him with, to wit, that his heart was not sincere. So likewise the Lord explaines himselfe, in describing *Dauids* integrity to *Salomon.* And if thou walke before me as *David* thy Father, in integritie of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to [all] that I have commanded thee, *1 King. 9.4.* By this we plainly see, that sincerity, sets a man to doe all that God enjoynes. Christ therefore in the new Testament, describing sincerity to the young man that thought himselfe as upright (doubtlesse) as any, *All these things have I kept from my youth: what lacke I yet?* Jesus said unto him, *If thou wilt be perfect: that is, if thou wilt be sincere and upright indeed, in the eye of God, who is a searcher of the heart, goe and sell all thou hast, and give to*
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the poore, and come and fellow me : Part with every
lust, with covetousnesse thy darling sinne, as well
as with others, to which thy nature is not so apt,
and resigne up thy heart, to obey me in all things,
so shalt thou be happy here and hereafter, Sincer-
ity makes a man set all Gods will before him, as
a rule to walke by, and to obey God in that part
of his Will, that most opposeth that sin, to which
he is most enclined, as well as any other. *For all
his judgements were before me; and I did not put a-
way his statutes from me. I was upright before him,
and kept my selfe from [mine iniquity]* Psa. 18. 22,
23. *I did not put away his Statutes from me.* &c. An
unsound soule will not take notice of such a pre-
cept, as opposeth his speciall sinne: such a pre-
cept must goe for a blanke, which the soule throws
by, and will not thinke of, but as conscience now
and then put him in minde of it, whether he will
or no. But 'tis not so with a man in whom sincer-
ity is: that precept which doth most oppose that
sinne, to which he is most inclined, he labours to
obey as well as any other. *I was upright before
thee, and I kept my selfe from [mine iniquitie.]* An
unsound soule sets so many of Gods statutes be-
fore him, as rules to walke by, as suits with him-
selfe and the times, and no more. Such precepts
as oppose his speciall corruptions, or displease
the times, and so expose him to suffering, these he
balkes and puts away, as David here saith, and
cals them as the rotten Scribes and Pharisees, were
wont to doe, *Least Commandements*, small things
not to be regarded: which rottennesse Christ
tooke up roundly in those ironicall words, *Who-*
soever

soever shall breake one of these least Commandements, shall be called the least in the Kingdome of God. Godly sincerity makes no difference of greatest and least, between the precepts of God, but sets all before a man as a rule to walke by, and makes the soule laborious to observe all. Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy Commandements, Psa. 119.6.

That God may have all the glory due to his Name.] That sincerity makes a man to aime at the glory of God, and not at his owne glory, is manifest by that expresseion the Apostle useth in my Text, *not wish fleshly wisdom*, that is, not declaring our owne humane parts and gifts, to advance our owne honour and esteeme, but as the Spirit gave us utterance, so we speake in all plainnesse and sincerenesse, that so poore ignorant soule might be edified, and God glorified. Christ describing an upright man to the unsound Scribes and Pharisees, describes him (I remember) by this property, *That he seeketh not his own glory, but his glorie that sent him. He that speaketh of himselfe seeketh his owne glory, but he that seeketh his glorie that sent him, the same is [true,] and no unrighteousnesse in him, Joh. 7.18.* Christ that had no guile found in his lips, vindicated his sincerity still by this, that he sought not his owne glory in any thing he did, but the glory of him that sent him: and that man which doth thus, *he is true, and there is no unrighteousnesse in him.* That is, he is sincere, and no hypocrite as the world may falsely judge. As Aristotle said of a friend, that he is, *alter ego, Another I, or another selfe*: so may I say of a Christian, that he

is alter *Christus*, another Christ: as he is, so are we in this World, saith Saint John. As he aimed in all things at the glory of his father; so a sincere man aims in eating, in drinking, or whatsoever he does at the glory of God. God forbid (saith Saint Paul) that I should glory in any thing but in Christ. Sincerity is such a special worke of God upon the soule, that it makes a man give Christ all the glory, of all the good he does, and of all the good he has, and hopes for; and to appropriate nothing to himselfe but shame, yet am I nothing, saith Paul. Nothing but a sinner; nay, of all sinners the chiefe.

An upright man, is a man after GODS own heart: now looke what GOD most looks for, that an upright man looks most at, and labours most of all to helpe God unto. Now GOD looks at his owne Honour and Glory in every thing, wherein he hath to doe with the creature, above any thing. He made all things for his glory; and upholds all things for his glory. There should never have been a stone laid, in the glorious Fabricke of this World, had it not beene for Gods glory: nor not a stone should have beene left upon a stone, long ere this, but the whole World should have beene turned into his first nothing, were it not for Gods glory. This a sincere man eyes, and answerably applies himselfe to GOD in all hee does; as an obedient Wife applies her selfe to that sweet carriage, that she knowes will most delight her Husband. When Isaac had discovered to Esau, that Venison was the most savoury

meate, which his soule desired, *Esau* applied himselfe to his father, and goes a hunting after it, that he might bring to his father what he most loved, and so obtaine his fathers blessing. Now God hath declared that his honour and glory is that savoury meat which his soule of all things most loves, and therefore all that are sincere children of God, they doe hunt and plot for this, in all their waies that they may bring God that savoury meat, which his soule most loves.

The description of sincerity being thus opened, I am in the next place to shew unto you, the grounds of the point; why we ought thus simply and sincerely, to have our conversation in this World. The grounds are these foure: First, because God commands it. Secondly, because God delights in it. Thirdly, because God hath appointed this and no other way unto all good. Lastly, because the World which lies in wickednesse, may be left without excuse. First, we ought in simplicity and godly sincerity, to have our conversation in the world, because God commands it. *I am the Almighty God, walke before me, and be thou perfect; that is, entire, sincere, Gen. 17. 1.* This Commandement God gave to *Abraham*, and in him to all us. This Commandement is not grievous; a Commandement that hath any injustice in it, that any should complaine or except against it, and therefore ought to be obeyed. For God made man, and can unmake him againe at his pleasure; and therefore may justly serve himselfe of him, and appoint him what rules he pleaseth to walke by. *I am God Almighty [walke before me, and be sincere.]*

by

by my Almighty power made thee of nothing, and can quickly by this Almighty power, turn thee into worse then nothing: therefore walke thus and thus, as I command thee.

God did more by his Almighty power, then barely make man: God by his Almighty power made man upright: that is, not as uprightnesse notes sincerity, but as uprightnesse notes perfection. And therefore God might justly command us, (if he would) to walke perfectly, as Angels and Saints in Heaven doe. This Commandement therefore is not grievous, but full of mercy and moderation, that he commands us onely to walke before him, and be upright, as uprightnesse notes sincerity. Therefore seeing 'tis a Commandement full of justice and mercy both, it ought to be obeyed; and so consequently, every one of us ought in simplicity and godly sincerity, to have our conversation in this world.

Secondly, as God commands us to be sincere, so he *delights* in it; and therefore we ought in simplicity and godly sincerity, to have our conversation in this World. *They that are of a froward heart, are an abomination to the Lord; but such as are upright in their way, are his delight, Prov. 11.20.* Kings, as they have Officers for necessity, so they have favourites, persons of honour for communion and delight. Now the King of Kings would have no fit persons of honour for communion and delight in this world, were there no upright men in it: and therefore we ought in simplicity & godly sincerity, to have our conversation in this World. God would live solitary and alone in this World,

without any pleasure or delight in this World, were there no upright men, nor uprightnesse in it: for God hath no pleasure in wickednesse nor wicked men. *Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickednesse, Psalm. 5. 4.* The God of this World, that rules in the children of disobedience, is a God that hath pleasure in wickednesse; but the God of all the VWorld, is not such a God; he hath pleasure onely in uprightnesse. *I know also my God, that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightnesse, 1 Chro. 29. 17.* And therefore we ought to walke in uprightnesse, or else we shal deprive the King of Kings, of his pleasure.

Thirdly, we ought in simplicity and godly sincerity, to have our conversation in this world, because God hath appointed this and no other way to all good. *For the Lord God is a Sunne and a Shield; the Lord will give Grace and Glory; no good thing will he withhold, from them that walke uprightly, Psalm. 84. 11.* If we would have the light of Gods smiling countenance, to shine upon our soules, which is ten thousand times more glorious, and reviving then the Sunne, we must walke uprightly: for the Lord God is a Sunne to such, and none else. *God is angry with the wicked every day,* saith the Prophet: and being angry with them every day, he cannot smile upon their soules, as the Sunne doth upon all creatures, but frowne and knit the browes against them. God dwels as a convincer and reprovcr, and not as a comforter, in the hearts of hypocrites. God feeds mens soules with gall and wormwood, with bitters, not with sweets;

sweets; with a certaine fearefull looking for of judgment, and fierie indignation, which have not their conversation in simplicity and godly sincerity, in this world. A Hell and not a Heaven, shal men that walke not uprightly, have within their owne hearts.

If we would have protection, we must walke uprightly: for the Lord God is a *Shield* onely to such. *He that walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly, his place of defence shall be the munitions of Rocks, Isa. 33. 15.* God is a consuming fire; and not a defence unto the hypocrite. In a word, if a man would have grace or glory, or any good thing else that he can name, he must walke in this way to obtaine it, to wit, in *simplicity, and godly sincerity*: for in no other way hath God engaged himselfe, to bestow any good upon man, but all evill. The Israelites going out on the Sabbath day to finde Minna, found nothing but a curse; and the reason, because out of Gods way. God will distribute blessings in his owne way: if we decline this way, God will inflict curses, and not blessings. Now upright walking is that way in which God hath promised to bestow all good, and none else: and therefore we ought thus to walke. 'Tis fit we should come to God, and not God to us; 'tis fit that unholy man should conforme to a holy God; and not a holy God to unholy man.

Finally, we ought in *simplicity and godly sincerity*, to have our conversation in the World, that so the world which lies in wickednesse, may be left without excuse, both in regard of their wickednesse towards God, and his children. VVicked

men complaine of Christ, that he is a hard master, looking to reape where he did not sow; that this and that precept is a hard saying, none can obey it. And others complaine that the world is so full of occasions and provocations, that 'tis impossible to walke uprightly. Others, that times are so hard and dead, that they cannot live of their callings, if they should deale justly, and walke uprightly. Now Christ wil stop the mouthes of all these at the great day, by setting before them those that have lived, in the same ages of the world, in the same employments in the world, under the same government of Christ in the World, and yet have kept themselves unspotted of the World, and have in simplicity and godly sincerity, had their conversation in the world: and then shal Christ *be cleare when he judges*, and liers mouthes shal be stopt, and be like the man that wanted a wedding garment. And therefore we ought in simplicity and godly sincerity to have our conversation in the world, every one in his place, that so Christ may doe this service by us against the wicked, at the great day.

2. Again, that wicked men may be left without excuse, as in regard of their wickednesse towards God, so in regard of their wickednesse toward Gods children. Now the wicked persecute the godly with tongue and hand, and pretend just ground for their practice; that the godly are, as he falsly said of the Prophet, troublers of *Israel*, enemies to Church and State. But at the great day, the searcher of all hearts will lay open all things according to truth; and make it plainly appeare

to

to men and Angels, that they had their conversion in this world, in simplicity and godly sincerity, and so guiltlesse of all that the wicked accused them of, and punish them for; and then wil Christ be cleare when he judges these wretches, for condemning the generation of the iust. Wherefore we ought to walke sincerely and blamelesly in this world, that so the wicked may have no plea for their wicked proceedings against us, or against the righteous proceedings of Christ, against them.

Ought we in *simplicitie and godly sinceritie*, to have our conversation in the world? Why? then let us examine our selves, and see whether we thus walke. Are ye *laborious*? that is, *constantly laborious, willingly laborious; laborious according to all your strength*, to doe all Gods Will, that he may have all the glorie due to his Name? Look backe, and call to mind, how this description of sincerity was opened, and lay open your hearts and lives by it, and see whether they agree not. Are yee *laborious* to doe the Wil of God? Or doe yee not the *work* of the Lord negligently? and so stand lyable to that dreadful curse denounced by *Ieremie*? Doe yee not rest in bodily exercises, which profit nothing? 'Tis the least labour in the World, to bring the outward man to duties; the labour of labours is about the heart, to bring that to duties; are yee laborious about this? Are yee watchful over your Spirits, and laborious about your inward man, that this in every thing, may goe along with the outward man to obey God? 'Twas that the Lord of old upbraided

Jer. 48. 10

his people withall, that they were laborious according to the outward man, to come to Church, and to be at all divine exercises, but they were carelesse respecting their hearts, which God most lookt at, and let this runne loose after vanity. *And they come unto thee, as thy people commeth, and they sit before thee as thy people; and they heare thy words, but they will not doe them: for with their mouthes they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousnesse, Ezek. 33. 21.* God most lookes at the heart, how that is entire too, or loose from himself. Are ye most laborious about that, which God most looks at? or do ye not least mind that which God lookes at most? In this consists the power of godlinesse, to be laborious about the inward man, to bring this to be obedient to the Will of God (*My Sonne give me thy heart.*) Neglect this, and thou wert as good sit stil, as labour at all about thy outward man, to bring that to be holy: thy labour about outside holinesse, is to God as the cutting off of a dogs necke: and God wil upbraid thy labour, as he did those hypocritical Scribes and Pharisees, who *washed the outside of the Cup and Platter.*

Possibly some of you may thinke, that you hold weight wel enough by this: That you are *laborious* according to the outward man, and according to the inward man, to doe the Will of God: but put in one weight more into the Scales & Balance of the Sanctuaray, to wit, this; Are yee *constantly* laborious to doe the Will of God? Tell me which way the Scales turne now. Sincerity makes a man *constantly* laborious to doe the Will of

of God, as you have largely heard; doe you this labour? Or are ye not quickly weary in well-doing; so weary as to leave off the work? Thou art watchfull over thy spirit to day; but art thou not as carelesse about it to morrow? The godly are subject to wearisomnesse, and *fainting in their minds* (as the Apostle intimates) in their labouring about, and watching with an unruly heart; but they are never so weary, as to give over the work. *David was wearied* often with his *groanings*, they were so deep, and breathed out so many precious Spirits; but yet as fresh strength came, he kept on groaning still, under the heavy burthen of a bad heart, and never left labouring about his spirit, to bring it to be more and more composed, entire, and one with God as long as hee lived. But unsound Christians are quickly weary in labouring about their hearts, just in that sense which God is said to be weary of repenting *Jer. 15.6. Thou hast forsaken me* (saith the Lord) *thou art gone backward; therefore will I stretch out my hand against thee, I am weary of repenting.* That is, I will repent no more: I will forbear the execution of my threatnings no longer. So rotten hearts are wearied with repenting, soul-searching, and soul-watching, that they will repent no more, nor maintain inward industry about their souls no more; but judge of it upon a little triall, as that which will shorten their lives, or at least, utterly end the felicity of their lives, and at last cry it down, as an unnecessary and unreasonable service. Is it not thus with you?

Possibly yet some of you may think, that you

hold

hold weight well enough, by the ballance of the Sanctuary. But put in one weight more, and tell me which way the scales turn then. Are ye *willingly and cheerfully laborious*, to doe the will of God? Doe you finde any soule sweetnesse, in your soul labours? Or are they not as the disease of the stone, strong tortures, without the least tang of sweetnesse? Is it not as death unto thee, to be searching, humbling, watching and observing thy spirit, a day? Doeſt thou not shunne and avoid occasions, as much as thou canst, that may make thee to looke in upon thy spirit, to check it in its vain way, as that which is like the pricking of thy *right eye*? Doeſt thou not make frivolous excuses, and needlesse businesse, to put by *Davids* opportunities, of private commerce with God and thine own soul? as one that findeth no pleasure nor profit, in this service of God? Doeſt thou not wish that prayers were over, Sermons over, the Lords day over, that thou mightest be selling Corne, and following thy secular employments, and carnall sports and delights, as those wherein thou findest more soul-content, then in any divine thing? *'Tis a joy to the just to doe judgement*, saith *Solomon*. 'Tis the sweetest pleasure in the world to an upright man to be in upright, holy wayes, doing uprightly to God and man. Gods word, Gods ordinances, Gods people, God service in every part thereof, are all transcendently sweet to an upright soul: *Sweeter then honey*, that is, sweeter then the sweetest earthly content. And the more spirituall, divine duties and exercises are, the more pleasing and ta-
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king still, to an upright soule. Duties of most seriousnesse and strictnesse, are of most soul-sweetnesse to him. Is it thus with you?

Possibly yet some of you may thinke that you hold weight well enough, by this balance of the Sanctuary. But put in one grain more, and tell me whether thou be not found too light then? Are ye laborious *according to all your strength*, to doe the will of God? Doe you *reach forth and presse forward*, as Saint Paul saith? that is, put out all your strength to obey the will of God? this in Scripture, where sincerity is pressed unto, is called a serving of God with *all our hearts*. You take a little pains to obey the will of God, but could you not take a great deale more if you listed? 'Twas the unsoundnesse of the Jews, that when they could have brought Males and legitimate sacrifices, they brought (to save their purses) maimed and deformed sacrifices. And so 'twas the unsoundnesse of *Saul*, that he could have killed *Agag* and the fat of the cattell, as well as the rest of the Amalekites, if he would. And is it not your hypocrisie, that you could doe a great deale more to please God, then you doe, if you listed? Doe not by and selfe ends make you pluck in your horns, and suspend your selves, parts and abilities from Gods service? Doth not the fear of the losse of your liberties, livings, lives, and the like, make you speak lesse for God, and doe lesse for God, then he hath given you ability and opportunity to doe? Doe yett not put forth your parts in the service of God, in reference to the safety of your skin, and not in reference

reference

rence to Gods command, which calls for all our might in his service?

If you tell me that you hold weight yet by the balance of the sanctuary, why? put in yet one grain more, and tell me whether the scales do not stand without poising either way. Are yee laborious according to all your strength, *to doe all Gods will?* according to that holy rule, *Dent. 15. 5. Onely if thou carefully hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to doe [all these Commandments] which I command thee this day.* You doe with Herod, by means of powerfull preaching and sharp affliction, reforme *many things* peradventure, but do ye labour to reform all things? To divorce your selves from your Herodias? To pull out right eyes, and to cut off right hands? To mortifie your *members which are upon earth;* that is, the sins of your souls, which are as deare unto you as the members of your bodies? or doe ye not spare *Agag,* and the fat of your lusts? pleasing sins, and profitable sins? Doe you observe doctrine and discipline, matter and manner in the worship and service of God?

You pray, but doe yee pray *feruently?* You pray, but doe ye *watch and pray?* You heare the word of God, but doe ye *take heed how ye heare?* You receive the Sacrament, but do ye *examine your selves and so eat?* You goe to the house of God about holy duties, but doe ye *look to your feet,* when you approach so neer unto God? you give to the poore, but doe you *give cheerfully?* you give, but doe you *give liberally?* You know the Scripture calls for manner as well as

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matter: manner is all in all with God. And sincerity is such a speciall worke of God upon the soul, that it makes a man laborious to do every divine thing exactly, according to that divine manner which God in his word prescribes. 'Tis not thus with an hypocrite: he is led by customs; and makes it a matter of conscience not to swerve from these, how incongruous soever to the word of God; or else hee is fearfully given over to a carelesse spirit, to doe divine things, as hits, he cares not how; any way, or no way, all is one. Or else, he is desperately pinned to his own will, being wiser in his own eyes then ten men that give a reason. Thus and thus he will walke, say all the world what they will: is it not thus with you?

If you tell me, that yet you hold out weight by the balance of the sanctuary, I am glad; yet possibly you may be one grain too light. Are ye laborious to doe all Gods will, *that God may have all the glory due to his name*? Doe ye not sacrifice to your own nets, and take the glory to your selves of your labours like *Herod*? When men applaud you, is not this to you, as the rubbing of a Parrat upon the head, very pleasing, and that which makes you hug your selves within your own thoughts: *Is not this great Babel which I have built*? Could such a thing have been done, if I had not done it? Or could any man have done it so well as I? Looke in upon your spirits before, but especially after divine duties, and see whether you doe not seeke your selves in them, more then the glory of Christ. Doe ye not give almes to be accounted liberall men, and that the

poore

poore may applaud you for good men, and good house-keepers? Doe ye not *blow a trumpet, when you give alms?* that is, so distribute your charity, as may be most advantagious to your own repute in the world? Do ye not let your left hand know still what your right hand doth? Are ye not damp't in your designs of charity and bounty, when 'tis to go forth in such a way, as if it were *cast upon waters*, or into the bottom of a well, where no eye can see, nor no tongue speak of your good works, nor no likelyhood of the least return? Do ye not looke for much observance, from such to whom you doe much? And repent of your kindnesse, when men doe not answer it in thankfulness? Doe ye eye Christs command, and out of love to him; give upon all just occasions as unto him? Are those that are religious tendered and succoured by you in their bonds and miseries, *as if you were bound with them*, according to the divine rule?

Doe ye not in prayer, more looke at words and expressions; then to your spirits? Doe yee not *pray in the market places*? That is, so pray that others may observe you, and blaze abroad that you are very devout persons? Are yee not industrious to pray well (as you call it) in publike, and carelesse and perfunctory, when you pray in private? Are ye not more constant a great deale, in the performance of publike, then in the performance of private prayers, where there is no observer nor applauder but God, which sees and hears in secret? Doe yee not after prayer, hug your own gifes, and admire your apt expressions
dexterite

dexterity of utterance; and to thinke much, that you have no more thanks given you for your pains; and that those that joynd with you, were no more affected? Doe yee not pia your spirits to your owne acute studied formes, and prayers in print, *boasting of things made ready to your hand* (as the Apostle speaks) and scoffe at the spirit of grace and supplication, Zech. 12. 10.

Doe ye not preach your selves and not Christ; and more looke at words then matter; to please men, then to please God? Doe ye labour to approve your selves to every mans conscience, or to every mans fancie? Doe ye not put plaine truths into abstruse tearms, a new coat upon old divinity, and strive to soar in drie Metaphysicall strains, above your owne and others apprehension? Doe ye not *build hay and stubble*, upon the true foundation? the opinions of Fathers and Schoolmen, and the tenents of proud time-servers, whom God hath given over to a *Spirit of delusion to believe lies, because they received not the truth in the love of it*? Doe ye aime at conviction, conversion, or ostentation in your preaching? Doth it not almost make you sicke like *Ahab*, that your elaborate Sermons in places of eminent note, have not yet brought you to a fat living? Do ye not preach *Christ out of envy*, as the Apostle speaks, to bring about your wicked designes, and to vend your malicious spirits against the godly? Doe yee not wrest the word of Christ, to confirme your time-serving tenants, and to maintain your voluptuous loytering life? And if

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so: is this in simplicitie and godly sinceritie to have your conversation in the world?

To you that by what hath been said, see, that you are yet unsound at heart, that you do not in simplicitie and godly sinceritie, order your conversation in this world, I have three things to say: Labour to be affected with your unsoundnesse: Then judge you selves, that you may never be judged of the Lord: And then beg the cure of your foule disease.

1. First, labour to be affected with your unsoundnesse. This is the killing mischief of hypocrisie, that it is hard and difficult, throughly to be found out, and truly to be bewailed. Hypocrisie is *vitium latens, vitium transfigurans, vitium aduans, & vitium obdurans*: a hidden, a transforming, a flattering, and a hardning vice. 'Tis a hidden vice. *The heart is deceitfull and desperately wicked, who can [know it]* (saith the Prophet.) *The spirit of a man may know the things of a man*, but deceit and guile, this lurks and skulks in such hidden corners of the heart, that the spirit of man does not know it. And hence it is, that multitudes thinke themselves very sincere, which yet are very unsound. A man may discerne drunkennesse, swearing, and whoring in himselfe, and yet all this while, be utterly unable to see the hypocrisie of his spirit: and hence 'tis, that you shall have drunkards, swearers, and whore-masters to confesse these vices, and yet plead for the goodnesse of their hearts and meanings too.

2.

When the unsoundnesse of the heart is discovered by the word and Spirit of God, then hypocrisie

crisie becomes *vitium transfigurans*, a transforming vice. The heart strives now, to put fair glosses upon foule matters; to put a beautiful vizard upon the ugly face of sinne; and to appear in the eye of a wakened conscience, quite of another colour; or at least nothing so ugly, as the Word of God would make it to be.

If this will not stop the mouth of complaining conscience, then it becomes *vitium adulans*, a flattering vice. The heart tells conscience now, that it is true, things are bad, but God is very good: hee is not *extreme to make what is done amisse*; a thousand worse persons have found mercy, and are gone to Heaven, and therefore thou needst not so much trouble thy selfe, O my soule. *Hee that beleeves makes not hast*; it is time enough yet, to amend all that is amisse, and to bee as good as the best.

All this while that is is a *hidden vice, a transforming vice, a flattering vice, 'tis a hardning vice*. All the while hypocrisie lies hid, and after it is discovered, and shifts and flatters, it insensibly hardens; so that whilst *deceiving*, the soule is miserably deceived, and then becomes *past feeling*, conscience being *scared with an hot iron*: that is, God utterly leaving conscience, to doe any office any longer for him, in checking such a shifting shuffling sinner in his sinfull way. And when this worke is done upon any soul, you may leave tolling, and ring out; for hee is dead and gone for ever.

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Now because hypocrisie is of such a shuffling subtile nature as this, 'tis very hard for a man to become truly sensible of it, and thoroughly affected with it: and therefore I exhort you, which are convinced by what was formerly delivered, of your unsoundnesse, first to labour to be truly sensible of it, and deeply affected with it. 'Tis a vice that of all vices, puts you into the furthest unlikenesse to God, and the neereest likeness to the Devil. It puts you into the furthest dissimilitude to God, of all vices: for God is *most upright*, saith *Isaiah*. *Thou [most upright] doest weigh the path of the just, Isaiah 26. 7.* God is *most upright*, and an hypocrite of all men least upright: and therefore, an hypocrite of all men, is least like God, and yet most like the Devil; of whom I may say, as the Lord of the Leviathan, *He is King*, saith God, *of all the children of pride*: So is the Devil, king of all the children of hypocrisie. As 'tis said of God, that he is *most upright*; so it may be said of the Devil, that he is *most guilefull*; an arch-hypocrite: and therefore guilefull persons are most like the Devil; and the more guilefull, the more like: and hence is *Elimas*, who was full of all subtilty, by way of eminency, called *The childe of the Devil* by Saint Paul, who knew well how aptly to stile hypocrites.

'Tis a vice that turnes a man into a Devil, and God into fury fiercer then the Devil: for the Devil is but Gods creature, and therefore though his fury be unexpressible by us, yet it is finite in it selfe; but Gods fury against hypocrites

crites is infinite; and therefore you shall finde him spending a whole Chapter, in breathing out woes against hypocrites; and therefore Hell as the most suitable place, and the greatest torments in Hell, as the most suitable thing to an infinite fury, is reserved as a peculiar portion for hypocrites. Were infinitenesse communicable, and by a finite creature susceptible, no lesse then infinite furie, should hypocrites burn in.

When thou hast by such considerations as these, brought thy spirit to bee truly affected with thy unsoundnesse, then judge thy selfe for it, that thou maist not bee judged of the Lord. Judge thy selfe as one most injurious to Christ and his glory, of all men. Judge thy selfe as a Traitor to the King of Kings: as one that hast craftily conspired, with the Devil and thine own heart, to keep out Christ from ruling and and raiging in thee: as one that hast subtilly betrayed the honour of God, in every action thou hast performed, seeking thy selfe under pretence of seeking him. Judge thy selfe as a cheater, that hast been cunning to deceive the godly, and thine owne poor soule. Judge thy selfe as a selfe-soule-murtherer, that hast craftily baffled thine own Conscience, that Gods Word might not convert and turne thee from thine ungodly course, and so save thy precious soule. Judge thy selfe as a *Judas*, that kissest Christ, bowest and cringest to Christ, and yet betrayest and crucifiest Christ. In a word, judge thy selfe as a right hand of the Devil, by which he hath done a great deale of mischief: Judge thy selfe as a

capitall offender, as a sinner of all sinners the chiefe; and then beg pardon.

And intreat God to cure the foule disease of thy heart. Tell him how long this disease hath been upon thee; and what a loathsome creature it hath made thee; and what a prime vitall part it is fastened upon; and how neer perishing thou art; and how it is past the cure of all other Physicians and Surgeons; and that there is but one way with thee speedily, if thou hast not remedie forthwith from him; and that thou hast nothing of thine own, to satisfie him for the cure of it; but hast a friend, Christ, that will pay all. Remember this to beg him, who *fashioneth all mens hearts alike*, to mend thy bad heart with a new one, according to his promise. Onely a new heart, is an upright heart; and this God hath promised to give, and this thou must urge, and beleieve, and wait: and this way shalt thou be healed, helped and saved.

To you which upon examination finde, that you doe *in simplicitie and godly sinceritie, order your conversation in this world*, I have onely this to say, you doe no more then you ought, and therefore there is no place for boasting. 'Tis our beauty in Gods eye, to be vile in our owne eyes, what ever our parts and endeavours bee. Thy uprightnesse of integrity, comes farre short of that uprightnesse of perfection, in which thou wast created: and therefore when thou hast done all that thou canst, yet say *that thou art an unprofitable servant*; a man that comes far short of what thou shouldest be, and of what once thou wast.

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But that which I would rather stand on a little is this; Thou that walkest sincerely, doest no more then thou oughtest, and therefore goe on. The Apostles exhortation to the *Hebrews* shall be mine to you: *Looke diligently lest any man faile of the grace of God; lest any root of bitternesse springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled, Heb. 12. 15.* We have that within us, and that without us, which will corrupt our simplicity, and turn us aside from our sincere conversation, if wee doe not watch over our selves. Where simplicity is, hypocrisie is not wholly extirpated; some remainders of this foule evill are in the best heart; and these roots of bitternesse, if you be not still labouring to grub up, they will quickly overgrow sincerity, and all good in the heart.

And as wee have that within us, which will quickly seduce us from that simplicity which is in Christ; so we have that without us too, which will doe the like, if we be not very watchfull, to wit, the Devil and his children. The Devil is an arch-Apostate himself, and he labours might and main, to make all the sons of men, to fall from grace and goodnesse as hee hath done; that so every one, may bee as neer like himsel'e, in sinne and misery, as may be. *He goes about like a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour* (saith the Apostle.) A thousand wiles hath the Devil to corrupt our simplicity; and hee is more laborious about this, then about any designe against the soule of man. The Devil is not so laborious, to make a breach upon a mans faith or patience, or the like, as upon a mans sincerity: because he

knows that every breach made upon this, is a stab to the heart, which will kill the soule for ever, if God doe not admirably cure it. If labour will accomplish this designe, the Devil will not neglect that: *he goes about seeking whom he may devoure.* If terrors and affrightments will accomplish this designe, the Devil will *roar like a Lion*, against a mans soule, as if he would teare him to pieces, and suddenly throw him into that bottomlesse pit, without all redemption. If flattery will be more prevalent then terror, to bring about this designe, the Devill will *transform himselfe into an Angel of light*, and promise us *all the Kingdomes of the World*, to winde us about to him.

And as the Devil is laborious about this designe, so he hath many Apostate children, such as have *lost that good that they seemed to have*, and these, as their father, being more like their father, then any of all his children beside, labour tooth and naile, not onely passively by example, but actively by promises and threatnings, especially in these last dayes, to turne aside soules from simplicitie in doctrine and manners; and by their devillish craft have turned away many; so that many have made shipwrack of faith and a good conscience, and are gone in the way of *Balaam the sonne of Bosor* that arch-hypocrite, studying and labouring to *mischieve Gods people*, for preferments and honours in the world; *speaking lies in hypocrisie, having their consciences scared with an hot iron.* And therefore 'tis but needfull and seasonable, that I exhort you to looke

to your spirits, and take heed of these bitter roots, that yee bee not defiled by them. Remember what God saith by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, *When the righteous man turneth away from his righteousness which he hath done, and committeth iniquity, all the righteousness which he hath done, shall not be mentioned, but in his trespass which he hath trespassed, and in his sin which he hath sinned, in that shall he die, Ezek. 18. 24.* And if once you wax weary of well-doing, and decline sincere walking, all thy former integritie shall not so much as once be mentioned to thy comfort, but to thy terror often shall it be by way of upbraiding, mentioned to thy conscience here, and to the aggravation of thy condemnation hereafter, as one that hast tasted of the powers of the word to come, of the sweetness of the spirit of grace, and yet after this, hast grieved, opposed, and done despite against it.

Having therefore put your hand to the plough, look not back: having begun in the Spirit, doe not end in the flesh: having begunne to order your conversation sincerely and uprightly, so continue unto the death, what ever you undergoe in life. All afflictions for righteousness sake, shall be tolerable, comfortable, and at last augment your Crowne. They shall bee tolerable when at height: for no trial shall bee above your strength: *God is faithfull by whom you are tempted, who will with the temptation shew a way to escape.*

They shall not onely bee tolerable, but they shall bee also comfortable, when at the very

height. For as the afflictions of Christ abound in you, so shall your consolations abound by Christ (as the Apostle saith.) The prereception of bitters, makes sweets the sweeter.

3.

Finally, they shall be profitable, to augment your Crowne of glory in the life to come, Blessed are ye when persecuted for righteousness sake, for great shall be your reward in heaven (saith Christ.) And this reward shall come quickly, which adds to the worth and excellencie of it: Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, wherefore hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy Crowne, Revel. 3. 11.



The second Sermon.

2 COR. I. 12.

For our rejoycing is this, the [testimonie of our conscience] that in simplicitie and godly sinceritie, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward.



He second proposition, now in order to be-handled, is this, That conscience can give testimonie, concerning the simplicitie or hypocrisie, of a mans conversation. Pauls conscience gave testimony with him, that in simplicitie and godly sinceritie he had behaved himself in preaching and living, in life and doctrine, as a faithfull Minister of Christ ought to do,

So likewise his conscience bore witnesse with him, concerning his sincere and holy desires, towards his brethren and kinsmen according to the flesh. *I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witnesse in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heavinesse, and continuall sorrow in my heart; for I could wish my selfe were accursed from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, Rom. 9. 1.* Jobs conscience also gave testimony concerning his integrity. *Let me be weighed in an even Balance, that God may know mine integrity.* By this, and many such like expressions of his, 'tis most plaine, that his conscience could give testimony concerning his conversation, what it was, whether good or bad. Davids conscience did the like. *Thou, O Lord, shalt judge the people: judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness, and according to mine integrity that is in me.* A large induction of particulars to this purpose, might easily be made, but I rather take another way to confirme this point.

Psal. 78.

The truth of this point (I conceive) wil be better confirmed and opened, by setting before you what conscience is; and then you wil plainly see what conscience can doe, and doth doe, in the soule of man. Conscience is better felt then defined, for ought that I can yet finde, among the learned. *Conscience is a part of the understanding in all reasonable creatures, determining of their particular actions, either with them or against them, say some. Conscience is a reflection of the soule upon it selfe, say others. Conscience (say I) is a naturall power which the soule of man hath; above all unrea-*
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sonable creatures, to compare his waies by some rule, and according as his waies agree or disagree with that rule, so answerably to beare witness with or against him.

First, conscience (say I) is a *naturall power, &c.* My meaning is, conscience is an ability, where-with God endowed the soule of man by creation, as with other gifts and abilities, for his comfort, if he walked wel; for his terrour if he walked ill. We may not imagine, that conscience came not into the World, untill after *Adams* fall: this were to suppose *Adam* in *Paradice*, to be a man without conscience. Conscience indeed as an Accuser and Condemner, came not into the World, untill after *Adams* fall; but Conscience as an Accuser, Acquitter, and Comforter, was in *Adam* before his fall. As long as *Adam* obeyed the Commandement of God, there was no cause that Conscience should accuse him, but as soone as he disobeyed Gods Commandement, conscience flew in his face, as appears by his flying from the face of God. Which plainly shewes us this truth, that conscience was in *Adam* before his fall, but did not begin to accuse, till *Adam* began to sin.

Secondly, Conscience (say I) is a naturall power [which the soule of man hath, &c. Now whether this power be in the understanding onely, or partly in the understanding and partly in the wil, I finde controverted amongst the learned. My opinion, I here humbly lay down, but I undertake not to state and determine the controversie. This power we speake of, I conceive to be a reflect act of the practicke understanding onely, transcendently

dently seconded by the power of the holy Ghost. Saint *John* confirms the first, that it is a reflect act of the practicke understanding onely, where speaking of this power in the soule, saith, *And hereby we doe know, that we know him, if we keep his Commandements, 1 Iohn 2.3.* That is, as if *Iohn* had said, We do view our waies by the Word of God, (which is an act onely of the understanding) and finding them to be in some measure leuell with that holy rule, we have this comfortable reflection backe upon our soules, that our faith is not a fancy, but a faith which worketh by love, and so sincere and saving: which reflection, is no other, as I conceive, but an act of the understanding, collecting a divine conclusion from divine premisses. He that keepeth Gods Commandements, knoweth God savingly; that he may safely conclude: but I doe keepe the Commandements of God, this I know, for I have viewed the Commandements of God, and my life by them: and therefore I know, that is, I am assured that I truly and savingly know God: which is no other, but that power in the soule, which we call conscience.

The Apostle Saint *Paul* (I conceive) confirms the second, that it is a reflect act of the understanding, *transcendently seconded by the Holy Ghost*, where he saith, *My conscience bearing me witnesse [in the Holy Ghost,] Rom. 9.1.* That is, my conscience transcendently seconded and assisted, by the holy Ghost, doth strongly testifie to my soule, that I am full of bowels towards my kinsmen after the flesh, and could doe any thing, or suffer any thing for their good. The order according

to which the holy Ghost strikes in with conscience, is this. The understanding makes a double proposition, one grounded in the VVord of God, the other in the heart of man: as thus, He that keepeth the Commandements of God, truly loves God; this proposition is grounded in the word of God; but I doe keepe the Commandements of God; this is grounded in the heart of man: And then drawes a conclusion from both; therefore I doe truly love God. This conclusion whilst holy, and drawne from divine premisses, to wit, the word of God, and the grace of God in the heart of man; the Spirit of God strikes in with the soule, in making this conclusion, and assists the weake soule, so that he concludes thus with *strong confidence*, that he truly loves God: and not onely secretly assists, but seconds, and saies the same thing to man, that his owne spirit doth. Then is fulfilled that of the Apostle, *the Spirit beares witnessse with our spirits, that we are the Sonnes of God.* If the premisses be corrupt, which the understanding makes, (for the minde makes propositions suitable to the light that is in it, from which to argue the goodnesse or badnesse of man) then the Divell that lying spirit, strikes in and seconds the soule, in that corrupt conclusion, which he collects from corrupt principles, concerning himselfe: So that now the deluded soule is peremptory and wisser then ten men that give a reason; in these is fulfilled that of the Apostle, *Their minds and consciences being defiled.*

Thirdly, I affirme conscience to be a natural power, which the soule of man hath [above all un-

reasonable creatures, &c.] Bruite beasts have no conscience: and yet they better serve God in their kind, then many of us which have conscience. Bruite beasts want reason, and therefore are not capable subjects of conscience; and yet against reason, and against conscience, man oftentimes does worse then a beast.

Fourthly, conscience (say I) is a natural power which the soule of man hath above all unteasonable creatures [*to compare his waies by some rule; and according as his waies agree or disagree with that rule, so answerably to beare witnesse with, or against him.*] By the former part of this description, is shewed unto us, what conscience is according to its being in the soule: *It is a naturall power, &c.* By the latter part of this description, is shewed unto us, what conscience is according to its Office in the soule.

The office of conscience, according to the description here given, consists in two things. First, conscience *compares a mans waies by some rule.* Secondly, conscience *beares witnesse with or against a man, according as a mans waies agree or disagree with that rule.* First, say I, conscience compares a mans waies by some rule. If the understanding be enlightened with the truth, to wit, the word of God; then conscience compares the waies of man by a perfect rule, to wit, the word of God. But if the understanding be enlightened, with natural and moral principles onely, then conscience compares a mans waies according to these principles onely, and so by an imperfect rule. For 'tis my judgement, with submission to better, that
con-

conscience in every man, follows that light which the understanding holds up unto it. This I know, that a man may and often doth goe against conscience: but conscience goes not against that light, which the understanding holds up unto it. A man may outwardly say this or that, contrary to the light of his understanding, but conscience inwardly speaks, at the same time, according to that light. I will further cleare this unto you, by an apt example. *Paul* you know zealously persecuted the Church of God, and his conscience (for ought that I can finde) never checkt him, but doubtlesse, rather acquitted him, for it; I mean: as long as he remained unconverted. And the reason, I thinke, is sufficiently rendered, where 'tis said, that he *did it ignorantly*. That is, according to that light which his understanding held up unto him, he thought he did God good service, in shedding the blood of his Saints, which methinks makes manifest what I say, that conscience still follows the light of the understanding.

The Apostle *Paul* persecuted the Church of God, and yet obtained mercy, because (saith the Text) *he did it ignorantly*: he did out of conscience (as I may say) shed the blood of the Saints. But now the most men have received the knowledge of the truth; and therefore if now men persecute the Saints of God, either in heart, tongue, or hand, they goe against knowledge, and so consequently against conscience; for conscience follows the light of the understanding, and so comes neere the committing of the unpardonable sin, to the committers of which God hath

said

said, there shall be no mercy shewed, either in this world, or in the world to come.

Here I would have you observe this, for the further clearing of what hath beene said, *That the Word of God is the rule, by which conscience compares the waies of men, so far-forth as the understanding is enlightened by the Word of God, and no further.* So far-forth as the understanding is ignorant of the Word of God, so far-forth conscience is silent. As long as Saint Paul knew not lust to be a sinne, conscience never accused him for lust as a sinne. And this surely is one reason why many shun the preaching of the Word of God, and the study thereof, lest by encreasing knowledge, they should increase griefe, as Salomon saith: lest by this means they should come to the knowledge of their sins, and so conscience pull them by the throat for them. Of such as these the Apostle Saint Peter speakes, where he saith, *Of this they are willingly ignorant, that by the Word of God the Heavens were of old, and the Earth, and the World that then was perished.* 2 Pet. 3. 3, 4, 5. That is, they did purpose-ly doe as much as in them lay, to put out that light which was in their understandings, which told them that he which at first made the Heavens by his Word, and did by his Word destroy them with Water, would one day againe destroy them with Fire and Brimstone: this they did labour to keepe themselves ignorant of, that so they might without checke of conscience, goe on in their sins.

To such as these, I may truly say with the Apostle, *If our Gospel be hid, it is hid unto those which perish, in whom the God of this World hath blinded*

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the minds, of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospell of Iesus Christ, who is the Image of God, should shine unto them, 2 Cor. 4.3,4. He that keepes himselfe in ignorance, that his conscience may let him goe on quietly in wickednesse, loves to goe to Hell without controll. Thou that canst not endure, that thy conscience should reprove thee secretly, 'tis no wonder that thou canst not endure, that thy Minister should reprove thee publikely. Thou that canst not endure that thy conscience should reprove thee for sinne now, must endure whether thou wilt or no, conscience to torment thee for thy sin, hereafter.

The second thing that I would have you to observe is this, *That conscience doth compare all a mans waies with the rule of the Word, so far-forth as the understanding is enlightned with the word.* All that light which the understanding hath received from the Word of God, conscience takes it and makes it a rule, by which he measures all a mans waies, thoughts, words, and deeds, to trie what agreement or disagreement there is, between them and the rule.

That conscience compares the thoughts of men by the Word of God, so far-forth as the understanding is enlightned by the Word, as well as words and deeds, is manifest by the language of the Apostle, where he speakes of the Gentiles on this wise, *Which shew the worke of the Law written in their hearts, their consciences also bearing witnesse, and their [thoughts] the meane while accusing or excusing one another, Rom. 2. 15.* Divine light so far-forth as it shines into the hearts of heathens, conscience

science makes use of it as a rule, by which to examine their very thoughts, and so answerably to accuse or exculpate them, as their thoughts are found to agree or disagree with the rule. S. Paul likewise confirms this truth. *I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience bearing me witness in the holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart, for I could wish my selfe separate from Christ, for my kins-folke in the flesh:* Saint Paul here tels us that his conscience did beare him witness, that his thoughts and desires were thus and thus sincere, respecting his brethren; which conscience wil never doe, before he hath levelled a mans thoughts and desires by the word of God, and found them to be so: by consequence then it is manifest, that conscience compares a mans thoughts by the rule, as wel as his words & deeds.

Rom. 9.1.

Conscience keeps Court in the heart, and therefore can and doth observe our thoughts, as wel as our words and deeds. Conscience keeps a Court of justice in the heart, and sits upon the life and death of the soule, which is ten thousand times more precious then the body; and therefore wil not sift this and that, and let other things goe, which the word condemnes, as well, and as plainly, as it doth any thing else. The word of God you know cōdemns evil thoughts as wel as evil words, and not onely grosse evil thoughts, as thoughts of murder, adultery, and the like, but *vaine idle thoughts*; and therefore conscience can do no lesse, as Gods Vice-gerent in this lower circuit, but examine these, as well as words and deeds, by the rule of Gods word, to see how fr they agree to or

disagree from it. Which worke when conscience hath exactly done, then it *bearcs witnesse with or against a man, answerably as a mans waies agree or disagree with this rule*: which is the last clause in the description of conscience, and comes now according to order and method to be a little opened.

Conscience when he hath compared a mans waies by the rule, and exactly found out how they agree with, or agree from it; the next thing he doth, is, he beares witnesse with, or against a man. This clause I adde, in the description of conscience; because 'tis a divine power placed in the soule of man, to be as it were a Judge betweene God and man. Conscience takes notice of things together with God, and compares them by the rule together with God, and then pronounceth sentence with or against man, for God. First I say, conscience takes notice of things together with God: and hence it is, say the learned, that this power in the soule is called Conscience. *Scire* (say they) is said of him which knowes one thing alone, so as none else knowes it with him. *Conscire* is said of three or foure, which know some secret together. Conscience therefore, must needs signifie a combination of two at the least, in the knowledge of some secret thing. Now this combination cannot be between man and man; for man doth not know the secrets of my heart, no further then as I reveale them to him: this combination neither cannot be betweene man and Angels, for they doe not know the secrets of of my heart together with my selfe.

selfe. This combination then must needs be, between God & man. God knows all our thoughts, *There cannot be a thought hid from thee*, saith Job of God. And he knowes all our words and deed : *all things are naked before him, with whom we have to doe.* And man also by a gift from God knowes together with God, his thoughts, words, and deeds ; and compares them by the rule together with God ; and then beares witnesse with or against himselfe to God : and this gift we therefore call Conscience.

Job 42. 2.

Here note this, *That conscience beares witnesse with or against a man, no farther then his waies agree or disagree with the word of God.* There can be no bribing of conscience, to speake better or worse of any to man to God, then his waies deserve. Conscience beareth witnesse against a man, when having compared the waies of man by the word of God, he findes them to disagree from it. But here possibly some of you may say, Doth any mans conscience beare witnesse against himselfe ? against his owne Land-lord, in whose house he dwels ? To this I answer, yes. The Apostle confirms this, where he saith, *If our hearts condemn us, God is greater then our hearts, and knoweth all things,* 1 John 3. 20. *If our hearts condemne us, &c.* Conscience will give testimony and sentence, against the very wombe that beares him, if wicked ; and so far-forth as he knowes it to be wicked. Conscience cannot now give an exact testimony, nor an exact sentence against a sinner, because the understanding holds not up unto it an exact light : *We know but in part, though God know all things ;*

and knowing but in part, conscience yet can doe his Office but in part; but what he does is faithfull and righteous, according to the light which the understanding holds up unto him. But hereafter when we shal all appeare before the judgement seat of Christ, Christ wil by his Almighty power, set up a glorious light in every mans understanding, so that they shal know all things done in the body, whether good or evill, as compleatly as Christ himselve, and then conscience will speake as plain and as broad as Christ himselve: and hence 'tis that men shal stand silent before the Judge of all the world.

The testimony which conscience gives against a man now, is very audible: so audible that it causeth the merriest heart, in the midlt of laughter to be sad. It will make the stoutest sinner stoope, his heart to ake and shake within him, and his countenance to gather blacknesse. But at the great day, it will make every sinner in *Belshazzars* case, and worse, when he saw the hand-writing in the wall. It will make sinners at their wits end: to wish for *Mountaines to fall upon them and cover them*, or dispatch them utterly.

Conscience beares witnesse with a man, when having compared his waies by the rule, he findes that they agree therewith. So audible and so sensible is the testimony, that conscience gives now with a man, that it makes him to rejoyce in the midlt of all outward troubles and hardships: For our rejoycing is this, (saith *Paul* and *Timothy* in the midlt of all cheir outward troubles) the testimony of our conscience that in simplicity and godly sincerity,

city, not with fleshy wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world. Conscience spake so loud, and so plain, and so comfortable, in giving testimony with them, concerning their integrity, that they understood well what he said, and were more comforted by this still testimony within, then if hundreds without, had given testimony with them to their adversaries, and said they were upright men. But much more audible and comfortable will the testimony of conscience with a man be, at the great day: but I let that alone till then.

At present I hope you see enough, by this description of conscience, to confirme the truth in hand, to wit, *That conscience can give testimony, concerning the simplicity or hypocrisie of a mans conversation.* Now the reasons why God hath given unto conscience this power, are these: First, that man might have something within him, to comfort or terrifie him, when all things without faile. Secondly, that Gods proceedings with man, may be by man, confessed to be just. Lastly, that God at the great day, may dispatch a great deale of weighty businesse speedily.

First, God hath given this power to conscience, to give testimony concerning the simplicity or hypocrisie, of mans conversation, that so man might have something within him, to comfort or terrifie him, when all things without him faile. If a man walke sincerely, conscience will be a comfort to him, when father, mother, husband, wife, wealth, and all friends faile him. And this comfort will be a continuall feast, in famine; con-

tinuall honour, in disgrace; continuall wealth, in poverty; continual liberty, in bonds; continuall peace, in warre; continual health, in sicknesse; continual ease, under every burthen. This was meate to eat, to *Paul* and *Timothy*, which the world knew not of. Nay, this was transcendent consolacion in the midst of troubles, to *Paul* and *Timothy*, which the believing Corinthians dreamt not of: and therefore 'tis, that they thus wrote to them, *Our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that we have sincerely ordered our conversation in the world.* As if they had said thus, Though we have lost many comforts, yet we have not lost all; we have something within us, which is a continuall comfort to us, in the midst of all the sorrowes and miseries, which we meet withall: and that is, the peace of a good conscience. And if man walke not sincerely, conscience is by divine appointment, to be an accuser, condemner, and in part an executioner of torture upon the delinquent, in this life. This worme shal gnaw within, when things are carried ~~sm~~ both without. This dog shal bite and teare within, when all are afraid to barke without. This blood-hound shal dog the sinner; let him goe with *Cain* into the Land of *Nod*, into what place he will, or to what employment he will: so that proud man shal feelee something within, for his wickednesse, when he feelles nothing without.

Secondly, God hath given this power to conscience to give testimony concerning the simplicity or unsoundnesse of mans conversation; That so all Gods proceedings with man, both here and here-

hereafter, may be confessed to be just. *One witnesse, said God, shall not testifie against any person, to cause him to die, Deut. 35.30.* Two witnesses God accounted sufficient, to vindicate every act of justice amongst men: but under two, God would not allow judicature against any man; that so judgement might be cleare, the Judge confessed to be righteous, and the malefactor silent. God the great Judge of all the world, keepes himselfe to this rule, in his proceedings of judicature against man. Two witnesses will God have, against every malefactor, to wit, Christ and conscience. God doth immediately see all things done by man, and is a witnesse himselfe, to all that he commits in the body, as we guesse by his owne words, *Because they have committed villany in Israel, and have committed adultery with their neighbours wives, and have spoken lying words in my Name, which I have not commanded them, even [I know] and am a witnesse saith the Lord, Jer. 29.23.* By this we see, that God the Father sees our sinnes, and is a witnesse; but because he wil not be a witnesse in his owne cause, he will have two sufficient witnesses besides himselfe, to wit, Christ, and conscience: both very true.

The diuel would willingly be a witnesse against man, as an evil Spirit that knowes much by man, but does not know so much as the spirit of man, which is in him: and therefore not a sufficient witnesse. But if that evill spirit did know as much by man as mans own evil spirit which is in him, yet being corrupt, he would prove a false witnesse against man: a Knight of the Post, and

we re any thing against man, to bring a great misery upon him, as is upon himselfe, if he might be admitted for a witnesse, such is his diuellish hatred and malice, to all beings better then his owne; but therefore God will not admit of him as a witnesse, for or against a man. Two true witnessess will God have, one without a man, and another within him; one in Heaven, and another in Earth; to wit, Christ and conscience: *Behold I have given him for a witnesse to the people,* saith God the Father of Christ, *isa. 55. 4* And this witnesse is in Heaven, saith *Job: Behold my witnesse is in Heaven,* *Iob 16. 19.* Not so in Heaven, that he is not also in earth; or as if he were ignorant of any thing done in Earth. for then he could not be a sufficient witnesse. *Iob* speaks of Christ, according to his speciall place of residence, and that is in Heaven: but Christ hath a Country house, here below in our hearts, where he hath one abiding continually, that is equall to himselfe. that tels him all, to wit, his spirit: so that Christ is as competent a witnesse as conscience, that sits as Register still in the heart, and never stirs out of his place.

These two witnessess doe, as that man was commanded to doe which had a sheepe committed to his trust, and the sheepe torne in pieces by wilde beasts; he was to bring some of that which was left; some horne or hoofe, or any part else that was left for a witnesse of the truth thereof, *Exod. 22. 13.* Thus Christ and Conscience bring before God and the soule those precepts which were by God committed to man, to be kept, and which

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he hath suffered his unruly heart to breake to pieces : my meaning is, so lively do these two witnesses set before the sinner, the breach of every precept, according to every circumstance, as ever any party under the Law, could set before the owner, the tearing in pieces of his cattell, by the limbs and pieces thereof. And this being done, divine sentence is given, and the soule must needs bee silent, being so legally handled ; and Angels and Saints be forced to break forth and say, *Righteous art thou, O God, in all thy wayes, and holy in all thy works.*

Lastly, God hath given this power to conscience, to give testimony concerning mans simplicity or hypocrisie, that so *God at the great day may dispatch a great deale of weighty businesse speedily. And I will come neere to you to judgement, and I will be [a swift witnesse] against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers and false swearers,* saith the Lord. *Mal. 3. 5.* What the Lord then spake respecting a particular judgement, the same will be Gods proceeding with all at the great day. The books shall be opened ; Christs booke, and the booke of Conscience ; and so in a *moment*, in the *twinkling of an eye* ; that is very speedily all things shall be clear to Judge and malefactor, without troubling Juries, and other witnesses, as we doe here, which would make a long worke, at that great assize ; and all persons bee judged and sent to their place ; and so righteously judged, that not one shall open his mouth to complaine. Now this could not possibly be a worke speedily done, if God had not given this power to Conscience,

science, to reflect and give testimony, and to be in stead of, and better then a thousand witnesses beside, and all debating *pro* and *con*, between them.

The wisdom of God is here to be admired: for he hath made such a witnesse to give testimony with Christ for, or against a man, every way so fit, that nothing in the world can be judged so fit. Christ wee must all confesse to be very fit, to be Gods Delegate; because he came out of the bosome of God, and knowes exactly all his Lawes, which he hath given man to observe, which Angels doe not, and man is a party, and therefore both unfit. But the holy Ghost cannot be judged fit to be mans Delegate, because one with the Father and Sonne, and so a party in the cause. And as for Angels, they know not neither the proposed rule exactly, nor the aberrations of the Delinquent; and as for men, they are parties in the cause, and so would juggle together, and swear one for another: or at least as one flesh and bone, with foolish pity spoile a City (as we say:) that is, they would speake flattering and halting, and so over-turne justice at last, after a great deale of doe with them. Now to prevent all this danger, toile, and stir; God hath created such a power within man as to observe all things done by man; and no lesse one with man, then Christ is with the Father; and therefore as inexceptible a Delegate for man on the one side, as Christ is for God on the other side. And these two of an instant, without all disturbance, distraction, or turmoile, give in exact evidence concerning mans integrity or hypocrisie; and so speedily without
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all clamour, sentence, and execution, and all is finished; and the Judge of all the world, does more weighty businesse in a moment, and far better then all the Judges in this world could doe in the age of the world.

Having thus given you the point, and the grounds of it; let us see in the next place, how usefull this may be unto us all. Hath God given power to Conscience, to give testimony concerning the simplicitie or hypocrisie of mans wayes? Why then let us all take heed, how we order our conversation in this world. Give leave to your souls to think nothing, speak nothing, nor doe nothing, but what you would have written down, and delivered in to the Judge of all the world at the great day. When wee know a tale-teller is neer us, we are very carefull what we say or doe. Why? wee have alwayes a tell-truth in our bosoms, where ever we goe. or whatsoever we doe; who will tell all to the Judge of all the world, that we think, speak, or do: and therefore let us watch over our thoughts, words, and deeds; and so think, and so speak, and so doe, as those that look to have the comfortable testimony of conscience with them, at the great day of account; *That in simplicity and godly sincerity, we have had our conversation in the world.* Under the old Covenant, God had a *Tabernacle of witnesse*, which was the inner Court where the Arke was, in which the Law was, to give testimonie against the Israelites, when they did evill. So God hath now under the new Covenant, a *Tabernacle of witnesse*; and this is the inner Court, to wit, the heart, where
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Conscience is, to give testimony against us, when we transgresse. And therefore let us set a watch upon our hearts, and tongues, and hands, and intreat God with *David*, to *bold up our goings in his paths, that our footsteps slip not, Psal. 17. 5.*

I note this, because I see multitudes live as if there were neither Conscience, nor God, nor Devil, Heaven nor Hell. The speech of the Prophet of old, may I fitly here make use of. Men were then so audaciously wicked, that the very shew of their countenance did testifie against them: they declared their sinnes as *Sodom*, and hid them not: *Woe unto their soule (saith God) they have rewarded evil unto themselves, Isa. 3. 9.* Thus may I say of multitudes amongst us now, The very shew of their countenance, doth testifie against them. The wanton eye, the fiery eye, the drowsie walling eye, the burly Malmsey nose, the painted face, antick postures, gestures, and fashions, do all as *Iobs* wrinkles in his face, testifie against thousands, that they little lay to heart this doctrine, *That Conscience can speak and tell all their doings to God.* Proud *Hamans*, time-serving *Doegs*, drunken *Nabals*, whorish *Iesabels*, scoffing *Ishmaels*, declare their sins as *Sodome*, and hide them not; and as for Conscience, turne him off with a glasse of sack, and a play-house.

But let me say to these wretches, with the Prophet, *Woe unto their souls, for they have rewarded evil unto themselves.* You have made a long, black, bloody bill, for Conscience to open against you, the last day of this Terme; to wit, at death; which shall bee tried the first day of the next Terme,

Terme, to wit, as soon as you are out of the body: and then will Conscience give testimonie, so strongly against you, that if you would give ten thousand rivers of oile, nay, if you would give the fruit of your bodie, for the sin of your soul, it shall do no good; the cause shall goe against you, and sentence shall be past upon you: and then shall you know by wofull experience, the meaning of that place, *Rom. 2. 5. But after thy hardnesse and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thy selfe wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgement of God.*

Wherefore three things I would give in counsell to you all: seeing Conscience can give testimony concerning the simplicity or hypocrisie of mans wayes; suspend him not; sleight not his language; but give diligent attention to what he saith. Let us not stop the mouth of Conscience, seeing he can speake, and tell us what wee are. Many there are that labour to stop the mouth of Conscience, when he tels them plainly of their sins, and to destroy that divine power which Conscience hath, to speak in them, and to them. The Apostle Peter gives us a hint of these, where he saith, *Scoffers shall come in the last time, and shall say, Where is the promise of his comming.* For this (saith he) they are willingly ignorant of, that by the Word of God, the Heavens were of old, *2 Pet. 3. 5.* When Conscience told those scoffers, that would live in their sinnes, and scoffed at the day of Judgement, saying, Where is the promise of his comming; that God made the world by his Word, and drowned it quickly by his Word, when

when it was overspread with wilfull wickednesse; and therefore you have like cause, to look for like swift misery, for as much as you are so wilfully and desperately wicked. This sharpe and plaine language of Conscience, they could not indure; and therefore willingly laboured to darken this divine light, and to silence this faithfull House-Chaplain. Thus it is with many sinners now; Conscience now and then, delivers stinging language to their souls, for such and such sinnes, and then they set to lift this faithfull Monitor out of his place; and because they cannot possibly doe this, being so immediately inducted by God, they strive to gag his mouth, and kill him; by running wilfully into wickednesse, against all checks and reproofs of Conscience, and friends, as men desperately resigning up their souls to the Devil, because God will not humor, and satisfie them in their own wayes: and so shipwrack Faith, Conscience, Soule, and all for ever. That which oft-times follows upon this, is selfe-stabbing, selfe-drowning, selfe-hanging, selfe-poysoning, and the like.

This is crying wickednesse, and incurable wickednesse. 'Tis crying wickednesse to strive to gag and kill Conscience. 'Tis *Dei-cidium*. to murder God. Conscience is no other but Gods Vicegerent in the soul: or rather, Gods judiciary presence in the soul. So far forth therefore as a man wilfully doth injury to this, he doth commit high Treason against the King of Heaven. 'Tis to stab the Judge of all the world as hee sits upon the Bench, speaking Law and Justice, which

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very nature abhorres, as desperately divellish.

And 'tis incurable wickednesse: for 'tis to destroy the first *medium* of conversion, by which the holy Ghost works in man, to gag and kill Conscience. The first thing that the Spirit of God doth when hee comes to convert a sinner, is to convince his Conscience, and to make that sting him for his sins, and then stir him up to long after, and to seek for Christ; and then gives faith in Christ, and so saves the sinner. Now he that strives to silence Conscience, undermines his own salvation, in the very foundation and first stone thereof. He doth wilfully and wickedly prevent his own soul, of all the good that God doth in this way, to bring sinners home to himself: Thou doest little consider, O desperate wretch, what great wickednesse thou committest, that strivest to gag and kill Conscience. Thou committest double murder, in a spirituall sense; which is murder of the highest kinde: thou doest murder God and thine own soule. And therefore I beseech you all to take heed of this practise. Seeing God hath given Conscience ability and parts to speak, let him speak freely, though he speake never so sharply and plainly, and doe not check him.

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Nay doe not sleight him: which is the next thing I would a little presse upon you. A man that can speak, and speak to good purpose, though he be an enemy, we so far honour him, as to let him speak out fully what he hath to say, and not turn away the eare from him: give but this honour to Conscience. Many deale with Conscience,

science. Many deale with Conscience, as *Felix* did with *Paul*; he willingly heard *Paul* a while, concerning the faith of Christ, but when he came to reason of unrighteousnesse, temperance, and judgement to come he set *Felix* into a trembling; and then saith he to *Paul*, *Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will send for thee, Acts 24. 25.* So many will heare Conscience, whilst he gives testimony with them, of this good thing and that, which they have done, and it may be whilst he tels them of lesser faults, but when once hee comes to reason thoroughly with them about their sins, which are as dear as right eyes, and right hands unto them, and threatens them home, *with judgement to come*: when he tels them of that righteousness and temperance which the word commands, how much they have neglected it, and what they are liable to for it, and so sets their souls into a cold shaking sweat, then they have enough of Conscience, and they turn their ears and minds to some other matters; and send Conscience away, till they be better at leisure: this is no other, but to sleight Conscience in his place.

God will make no other of this, but contempt of his prime Court of Justice here below, and those that sit chiefe there, as for him: and thou wilt finde no other, but a great deal of secret soul-mischief by this. God hath no other Court here below, but the heart of man; and no Judge in this Court, but Conscience: and Conscience being Gods chiefe Judge, wilt thou hearken to him when thou pleasest; and when thou pleasest;

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turne the deafe eare to him, say what hee will ? Doeſt thou thinke that God ſweares Judges for this lower circuit, which know not Law, nor how to ſpeak upon the bench worth the hearing ? Doeſt thou think thy ſelfe too great to be arraigned by God ? and to answer to ſuch interrogatories, as he ſhall put unto thee ?

As God will make no other but contempt of this, ſo thou wilt finde no other but a great deale of ſecret ſoul-miſchiefe by this. To ſlight the voice of Conſcience, is the ready way to bring the ſoule into ſecurity and preſumption, which are unſenſible damning evils. When there was no King in *Iſrael*, nor royall Courts of judicature, every man did what was right in his owne eyes. So when this Royall Court of Conſcience is ſlighted, the ſoule will grow fearleſſe and careleſſe, and man will give leave to himſelf, to think, and ſpeak, and doe as he liſteth, and yet *promiſe peace to himſelfe, though he live in the wickedneſſe of his own heart* ; then which, what can be a greater ſoul-evil ?

Wherefore honour God, in his Royall way of judicature : and ſeeing he hath appointed an able Judge in thy ſoule, of thy wayes ; ſlight him not, but *diligently hearken to what he ſaith* ; which is the laſt thing I would a little preſſe upon you. Conſcience can ſpeake better of thy wayes then any man can doe : therefore give him leave to ſpeake, and diligently obſerve all his words, and tell me what he ſaith to thee. Doth he not tell thee, that thou art a drunkard, an adulterer, a ſwearer, a prophane of the Lords Day,

an unjust dealer, a self-seeker, a time-server, a man that orderest thy devotion and conversation suitable to the times, a man that makest thine own ends thy aime, in all thy actions? Doth he not tell thee that thou art an idle person, a busy-body, a railer, a scoffer, and malicious person? Or what is it that Conscience saith unto thee? For he speaks to no man else, but to thy selfe, so faithfull and discreet is he; and therefore I can enquire of none but of thy selfe, O sinner, what Conscience sayes unto thee. Conscience can give testimonie with or against thee; prethee hearken to him, and tell mee what he saith. When Christ was arraigned, and stood still and said nothing, the high Priest arose (saith the Text) and said unto him, *Answerest thou nothing? What is it which these witnesse against thee? Matth. 26. 63.* So say I to you, Conscience doth arraign you now and then, and he doth give testimony; what testimony is it that he gives? Is it against you, or with you?

If against you: What is it that he accuses you of, and condemns you for? Doth he condemne thee for the vanity of thy thoughts, for the levity of thy words and deeds? Doth he condemn thee for the pride of thine heart, or for the pride of thine heart and life both? Doth he condemne thee for shedding of innocent blood? for scoffing and persecuting the wayes of God? Doth he condemn thee for hugging some secret sinne, which the word disallows? or for thy superficial perfunctorie pietie? Whatsoever Conscience accuses and condemnes thee for, honour
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this Vice-Roy so farre, as to weigh thorowly what he saith; and call to minde thy wayes, and consider whether they have not been, so as Conscience saith: and if so, then compare what Conscience saith of thy course, with the Word of God; and if Conscience within, and the Word of God without agree in one, in what they say against thy course; doe thou strike in with thy Conscience and the Word of of God, and say of thy selfe and wayes, as they say, and joyne with them in judging and condemning thy selfe, and thy courses.

And then beg the Lord, that he will not strike in and judge thee too; for if he judge thee too, then thou art gone for ever. Tell him, that though thou hast sinned, yet Christ hath died; and here hold. And then beg him to cleane and cure thy wicked heart, that thou maist goe, and sin no more. lest a worse thing befall thee: namely, to be delivered from the hands of a condemning Conscience, into the hands of a condemning God, who will teare thee in pieces, and there will be none to deliver.

If Conscience give testimonie with you, that you are pure and upright, as he useth the expression to Iob, that in simplicitie and godly sinceritie, you have had your conversation in the world; why then? weigh your wayes by the Word of God, and see whether the Word of God saith the same of your wayes which Conscience doth: if so, why then doe you strike in too, and say as Conscience and Gods Word doe, and so own Gods great work of grace in your hearts, in making them upright; and

think that thou canst never declare love enough to God, which hath declared so much love to thee, as to make thee a man after his own heart, to be a companion for his owne Son and Selfe, in grace and glory.

The third Sermon.

2 COR. I. 12.

For our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our Conscience, that in simplicitie and godly sinceritie, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-wards.



He third proposition, which now according to order and method, comes to be handled, is this, *That consciousness to our selves, of the simplicitie and sinceritie of our conversation, will yeeld us joy in the midst of troubles.* Pauls and Timothies Conscience giving testimony with them, concerning the simplicity and sincerity of their conversation, made them to rejoyce in the midst of all the troubles they underwent. *For our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our Conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, we have had our conversation in the world.* I thinke the Psalmist points at this truth too, where he saith, *Unto the upright there ariseth light [in the darknesse] &c. Psal. 112. 4.* By the darknesse, I conceive he means troubles and injuries from

from wicked men, which because they are more vehement then many other troubles are, *the mercies of the wicked being cruelties*, the Psalmist elsewhere calls them, The sorrows of Hell, as here he calls them *the darknesse*: now in this darknesse, though *the darknesse*, that is very sharp misery, yet there ariseth *light in it*; by light I conceive is here meant comfort and joy from Conscience, giving testimony concerning their uprightness, as attended with the Spirit of *glory and of God*, as Peter calls the holy Spirit of consolation. If you conceive not this Scripture plain enough, to consent with my Text, read Davids language in the seventh Psal. 10, 11. *My defence is of God, which saveth the upright in heart*. God judgeth the righteous; and God is angry with the wicked every day. As if David had said, This is my comfort in the midst of all the troubles and fears I am in, that my Conscience tells me, my conversation in the world hath beene led according to the dictate of an upright heart, no way injurious to these sons of *Belial*, which labour to be every way injurious to me; and therefore I am sure that God, which is alwayes a defence unto the upright, will be a defence unto me: God considers the wayes of the upright, and smiles upon their souls to their great consolation, when the world frowns, this I finde by experience; but rotten wretches God is continually angry with, and this he will first or last (I am sure) make them to know with a witnesse. Solomon likewise consents to this as a truth; to wit, That the testimony of conscience concerning the simplicity of mans conversatioⁿ, will yeeld him joy

in the midst of troubles, as we may collect from his language. *Prov. 15. 23. A man hath joy (saith he) by the answer of his mouth.* When a man upon every occasion speaks sincerely, Conscience within cheers and comforts a man whatsoever follows upon plain dealing to the outward man. 'Tis me thinks as if *Solomon* had said, Let a man speak sincerely upon all occasions, and he shall be sure to finde his Conscience comfort him, in the midst of all troubles that may follow upon it.

Troubles are either naturall, or accidentall. Naturall troubles I call such as man is born unto, by reason of sinne. By the fall of *Adam*, man is borne to troubles, as the sparks flie upward, *Job 3. 7.* to troubles in body, in soule, in husband, in wife, in children, in servants, in kindred, in friends, in substance, in all things that are given man for his good. To the just as well as unjust, come troubles in all these; onely here is the difference, consciofnesse of simplicity and sincerity sweetens all those to the godly, whereas the wicked must swallow them in their full bitternesse. That Conscience, which tells a man that in simplicity and godly sincerity he hath had his conversation in the world, will also tell him, that all troubles in the flesh, shall worke together for the good of his Spirit; and that God will give strength to bear them, and a seasonable deliverance out of them; and this sweetens these bitters. That Conscience, which tels a man, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, hee hath ordered his conversation in the world, will tell him also, that 'tis a wise and gracious Father that doth thus, and thus

thus afflict him; yea, Conscience now and then shews the soule, the bright beames of Gods smiling countenance, that he may see that 'tis Indeed a reconciled Father which doth afflict; and this like *Jonathans* honey revives much, and fetches life in swooning fits, under great troubles. That Conscience which told *Iob* that he was sincere, told him also in the midst of all his troubles. that his Redeemer lived, and he should see him with his fleshly eyes: moreover it told him, that when God had tried him, *that he should come forth as gold.* This sugered his bitter portion, and sweetened every bitter drug he took. The like may be said of *David*; his Conscience told him that he was upright; and this, Conscience told him also, that God was his God; *Thou art my God, and I will praise thee: thou art my God, and I will exalt thee, Psal. 118. 28.* and that God would *light his candle, and enlighten his darknesse* *: that is, turne all his sorrows into joy, and his troubles into advantages; and this made every burthen easie. Thus we see, that consciounesse to our selves of the simplicitie of our course, yeelds comfort in all troubles for sins sake, which I call naturall troubles.

Troubles caused by Religion and religious walking, which I call accidentall troubles, because by accident not of its proper nature, Religion exasperates wicked men against us, these I conceive my Text principally points at; and as for all these, though the fiercest kinde of troubles, and therefore called by *David*, *The sorrows of hell*, yet if a Christian hath but the voice of Con-

*Psal. 18.
28.

science with him, that hee hath walked simply and sincerely in the world, this will keep his head above water, though these waves be neuer so tempestuous: this will make a man sing in a dungeon at midnight, as *Paul* and *Silas* did: this will make a man smile in fiery flames, as many of the Martyrs did: this will make a man alwayes rejoyce, in the midst of all sorrows: as *sorrowfull, yet alwayes rejoycing*, 2 *Corinth. 6. 10.* Sorrowfull alwayes were the Apostles of Christ, such hard usage they alwayes met withall from the world, for the Gospels sake; and yet in the midst of all, joyfull, because of that sweet peace which their Consciences spoke unto them, that they were not such as the world judged them to bee, but vvere simple and sincere in life and doctrine; and so this Scripture sounds the same in sense and substance with my Text: *For our rejoycing is this, the testimonie of our Conscience, that in simplicitie and godly sinceritie, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God we have had our conuersation in the world.*

You have seen now, in what troubles the testimony of Conscience, concerning a mans simplicity, will rejoyce a Christian. I will in the next place shew you, what rejoycing it is that the testimony of Conscience will yeeld a man in trouble. Joy is either sensuall, or spirituall. Sensuall joy is a meer and naked joy in the creature, so far as it pleaseth the senses, Of this joy speaks *Solomon*, where hee saith, That hee with-held his heart from no joy, *Eccles. 2. 10.* That is, any thing

thing that might delight any sense, he got to him : he had *men fingers and women fingers*, and all the delights of the *sonnes of men*. Thus to order a mans conversation, is to live sensually and not sincerely ; and therefore Conscience gives testimony against this man, and not with him ; and so consequently checks and curbs this joy, and not causeth it : Conscience dampes this mirth much, by griping the Spirit now and then, in the midst of laughter.

Spiritual joy, is the soules rejoycing in God, as reconciled in Christ.

Spiritual joy, is the soules] rejoycing in God, &c. Divine joy is therefore called spiritual, because the subject of it is a spirit, and the object of it is a spirit, and all the manifestations of it spiritual. The subject of divine joy, is the Spirit of man. Divine joy doth not take onely the eare, or the eye, or the taste, or the smell, as carnall joy doth, but the heart : *Let the heart of them rejoyce, that seeke the Lord, Psal: 105. 3.* The heart is broken for sinne, and this is made to rejoyce in Gods mercie, as a pardoner of sinne : the same bones which are broken, are made to rejoyce. *Make me to heare joy and gladnesse, that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoyce, Psal. 51. 8.* Davids heart was so overcharged with sorrow, that his bones were ready to breake in his body, and in this he desired some divine refreshing, that so all things out of order might be quieted and composed againe. As sorrow is no sorrow, unlesse it take the heart ; so joy is no joy, unlesse it warme the Spirit. And therefore saith David, *My soule shall be*
joy.

joyfull in the Lord, [it] shall rejoyce in his salvation,
Psal. 35.9.

God doth honour that in man with joy, with which man honours him by obedience: now, the soule of the upright, obeyes God. *My soule hath kept thy Testimonies, and I love them exceedingly, Psal. 119.167.* and therefore God made *Dauids* soule to rejoyce, *I delight to doe thy Will: O God, yea thy Law is within my heart, Psal. 40.8.* The Law of God was within *Dauids* heart, and therefore the joy of God was within his heart too. Hypocrites doe not with their soules keepe Gods testimonies; their righteousness is like *Ephraims*, an outside righteousness that vanisheth, and so answerably God giveth them an outside superficial joy, that soone vanisheth and perisheth. They doe not set their hearts aright to obey God, as *David* useth the expression, *Psal. 78.8.* and therefore God doth not tune and set their joy aright, so that it jarres at the best; their spirits and their faces, are not alwaies merry together; *in the midst of laughter their hearts gripe them.*

Divine joy takes the spirit of man wholly, and oft-times immediately. Divine joy takes the spirit of man wholly when at lowest. A dram, a sparkle, the least measure of divine joy that can be thought of, revives and makes glad the whole Spirit of man, as a drop of strong Water warmes the whole heart. Hence 'tis, that *David* when he had but a drop of divine joy, distilled into his heart (as 'tis but a drop of this heavenly liquor, that our weak giddy soules can beare, whilst here below) presently he breakes out as a man warmed all over:

I will praise thee, O Lord, with my whole heart: I will shew forth all thy marvellous workes, Psal. 9. 1. The like phrase you shall finde David often speaking in. David found his whole heart warmed by those sparkles of divine joy, which God strooke in his dark, dolorous heart, and this fetcht life in him still, when ready to faint and swoon, and then all he returned to God againe, which he gave him; God warmed his whole heart with joy, and he returned his whole heart to God in thanksgiving. Divine joy warms all that is within, and all that is without, soule and body, and sets both at worke to praise God. Praise the Lord, O my soule, and all that is within me praise his holy Name, Psal. 103. 1. All that was within David, was warmed with divine joy, and therefore all that was within him, he would have should returne thanks and praise unto the Lord. Elsewhere he calls upon all without him. And my soule shall be joyfull in the Lord, it shall reioyce in his salvation: this is for all within him: then in the next verse, saith he, All my bones shall say, Lord who is like unto thee? Psal. 35. 9, 10. Divine joy warms all that is within a man, and all that is without: it warms spirit, flesh, and bones; the whole man, and sets all on fire to praise the Lord.

As divine joy takes the Spirit wholly, so it oft-times seizes upon the Spirit immediately, breaking forth in the heart as lightning, without any certaine knowne medium, by which to come into the soule. David doth darkly hint this, where he saith, Reioyce the soule of thy servant for unto thee, O Lord doe I lift up my soule, Psal. 86. 4. Thou needest

needest not this to speake in, or that creature to worke by, to revive a drooping spirit, as if the Psalmist had said, thou canst put joy and gladnesse into the sad soule of man, by thine owne immediate worke, as well as if forty Ministers were employed: this I beleeve, that none without thee can rejoyce me, but thou without any other canst do it, and therefore unto thee, do I lift up my soul. Sometimes God doth worke by secondary means and inferiour instruments, to rejoyce the soules of mourning sinners, as *David* would have comforted *Hanun* by his messengers: at other times, he will make use of none but his own Spirit, to beare witnesse with our spirits that we are the Sons of God, and walke before him as obedient children, and so rejoyces the soules of his people in troubles. Thus did God rejoyce the soule of *Paul* and *Timothy*, in their troubles and sorrowes: by the Almighty worke of his Spirit, he assured their spirits that they were his, & that their waies were pleasing to him; which made them thus to speak, in the midst of miseries, *Our reioycing is this, the testimony of our Conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, &c.*

Secondly, divine joy is called *spirituall*, because the object of it is a spirit. The object of divine joy is God, who is a Spirit, saith *John*. Divine joy hath God for its immediate object, and all other good things as beames of this Sunne, as streams from this fountaine, as mediate objects comming from, and relating to God. God alone is the ob-
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ject of divine joy. Most true 'tis, that God hath alwaies in his right hand Heaven; and in his left hand earth, to wit, all the Kingdoms of this world, to bestow upon whom he will; but had he neither, or would he part with neither, to any beside himselfe, but keepe all in his owne hand, yet an upright man would joy in him, and desire no bet-object to let out his affections upon. *Although the Fig-tree shall not blossome, neither shall fruit be in the Vines, the labour of the Olives shall faile, and the field shall yield no meat, the Flocke shall be cut off from the Folds, and there be no Herd in the Stalles, yet I will rejoyce in the Lord; I will joy in the God of my salvation,* saith the Prophet, *Hab. 3. 17, 18. Habakkuck* will rise in judgement against a thousand thousand soules, which would never judge God worthy to be lookt after, muchlesse delighted in, if he had not Corne and Wine, Heaven and Earth to bestow upon his favourites. This Text I conceive is a plaine testimony, that God alone is the object of divine joy: that is, not God as very wealthy, and very bountifull, but as very holy, and an absolute compleate being, above all things beside him. This was *Pauls* joy, to wit in God alone, as he whom his Conscience told him, he served sincerely, though weakly.

Upright men eye the Divine rule in their rejoycing, as well as in all other things. Now the Divine rule of joy, is, that it should be bounded and terminated in God. *Rejoyce in the Lord ye righteous,* *Psal. 97. 12.* This rule is repeated again and againe in Scripture, to note how apt we are to rejoyce in creatures, and sinnes which are worse

worse then any creatures, and not in God: as also to note, how strictly God looks at this, that we should make him onely the object of our joy, and all other good things, as beams of this Sunne, as blessings from his hand; and so consequently to rejoyce still, as long as we have communion with God, and our Consciences witnessing with us that we sincerely serve him, though we have nothing else in the world beside him, as Paul and Timothy did. *For our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our Conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdome, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world &c.*

Thirdly, divine joy is called *spirituall*, because all the manifestations of it are spirituall. They that have this joy in their hearts, doe not let their tongues sing ribaldry and vanity, such as flesh and blood delights in, but they *sing in the waies of the Lord*, Psal. 138. 5. That is, they rejoyce in divine things, to be thinking, and speaking of, and walking in the waies of the Lord. 'Twas Pauls and Timothies matter of joy, that they could walke sincerely in the waies of the Lord, and this they humbly gloried in. Such as have the joy of the Lord in their hearts, their tongues speake, and sing, in such a manner, that God is extolled and magnified, according to one attribute or another, which is *making melody to God*, as the Apostle terms it. As here in my text, the Apostle so expressed divine joy, that the power and goodnesse of the Lord were magnified, that he could and would give internall comfort, to those that did sincerely, though weakely serve him, when all externall

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comforts failed. Divine joy doth not, as carnall joy, transport men into drunkards, whore-masters, wantons, libertines, and so turne them out of the waies of the Lord; but raises their spirits to a higher pitch of love to God, and so makes them walke more strictly and chearfully *in the waies of God*. Divine joy makes a man rejoyce and worke righteousness, and not rejoyce and worke wickednesse. *Thou meetest him that rejoyceth and worketh righteousness, Isa. 64. 5.* Paul and Timothy thus rejoyced, that they could worke righteousness, that they could order their conversation sincerely, though by many handled injuriously. *For our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our conscience; that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, &c.*

Divine joy is the soules rejoycing in God [as reconciled in Christ.] Divine joy, as man upon earth is the subject of it, hath God in Christ for its object: that is, God as reconciled in Christ; for otherwise God is an enemy, and no man rejoyceth in an enemy. *And not onely so, but we also rejoyce in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement, Rom. 5. 11.* We cannot joy immediately in God, as Adam could, because our sinne in Adam, which made God angry with us: we must now have some to interpose betweene God and us, in whom is made up, what is wanting in us, and so Gods anger against us appeased: and therefore 'tis, that the Apostle thus speakes in the person of the godly. *We joy in God [through] our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom*

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we have received the atonement. This is sweetly set forth also unto us, under metaphoricall termes by the Prophet *Isaiah*. *I will greatly rejoyce in the Lord, my soule shall be joyfull in my God, for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a Bridegroom decketh himselfe with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth her selfe with Jewels, Isai. 61. 10.* God as cloathing us with the Garments of Salvation, and covering us with a Robe of Righteousnesse, is the object of joy to fallen man; and thus we know, he doth in Christ. God freely reveales an infinite love to man in Christ, and this begets love to him, and joy in him. He washeth away all our finnes in Christs blood, covers all our wants with Christs righteousness, subjects his Sonne to suffer what we had deserved, and to merit for us, all that from which we were justly excluded, to wit, communion with God, and eternall life. This love God sheds abroad in the heart of man, and this makes man love God, and joy in him. God out of Christ, is no other but a condemner of man: Conscience so apprehending God, is no other but a tormentor of man: and man betweene both these is in no other but Hell: and there is no joy in Hell. God in Christ reconciles man to himselfe, and then God joyes in man, and man in God. The blood of Christ makes peace betweene God and man, and betweene man and his Conscience, and makes God acquit, and Conscience acquit: God to speake peace, though man be not perfect: Conscience to speake peace, though man walk weakly, yet whilst sincerely; & this makes divine joy

joy in the heart, in the midst of all troubles, natural or accidentall. *For our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our Conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, &c.*

You have had a brieft hint now, by what hath been said, what that joy is, which the testimony of Conscience brings to the soule; to wit, a *conciliatory joy*, as I may fitly call it. A joy of peace and friendship, between God and man, and betwene man and himselfe, to wit, Conscience. Conscience tels that man which walkes sincerely, that he for his part is at peace with him; and that God is the like, though men and diuels be at variance with him; and that he shall have favours spirituall and temporall here, and eternally hereafter, say and doe all his enemies what they can; and this makes the heart of man leap within him, in the midst of troubles, as the babe in *Elizabeths* wombe, when she heard the salutation of *Mary*. *Our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our Conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the World.*

Having shewed you in what troubles, the testimony of Conscience will give joy; and what joy tis that Conscience causeth in the soule, I will in the next place shew you the ground of the point, why the testimony of Conscience, concerning a mans simplicity, must needs cause joy in the midst of troubles. This testimony of Conscience is attended with a *glorious power*, as the Apostle calls it, *κατὰ τὴν ἐξουσίαν τοῦ θεοῦ κατὰ τὴν ἀνάγκην* according to the glori-

ous power of him, saith the originall, that is, of the holy Ghost, which makes the testimony so strong, and so transcendently comfortable, that troubles and sorrows for sincerity sake, though never so great, cannot possibly over-bear the heart. *Strengthened with all might according to [his glorious power]* unto all patience and long-suffering, with joyfulness, 1 Col. ii. There is a glorious power, attending the testimony of Conscience, extended to upright soules, in times of great troubles for uprightness sake, which strengthens them with all might, so that all burdens cannot depresse them; unto all patience and long suffering, so that they will never be weary, and out of breath with bearing; and to do all this with joyfulness, so that no outward hardship, can utterly exhaust joy out of their spirits. Now, the testimony of Conscience concerning our simplicity and sincerity, being attended with this glorious power in times of trouble, as Peter saith, 'tis the spirit of glory and of God rests upon such, it must needs keepe up the dolorous spirit of man, and make him rejoyce in the greatest troubles. Paul and Timothy doubtlesse found this glorious power, attending the testimony of their Conscience, strengthening them with all might, unto all patience and long suffering with joyfulness, which made them thus to say, *For our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our Conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world.*

Secondly, the testimony of Conscience concerning mans simplicity and sincerity, must needs rejoyce

joyce a man, in the midst of all troubles, because
 Conscience now minds a man, that he walkes in
 the midst of all enemies and troubles, just as Christ
 did. There was no guile found in Christs mouth,
 though he was put to it againe and againe: What-
 ever he underwent from his Father, from the di-
 vell, and his children, yet still he walked sincere-
 ly, and faltered not in the least kind, for the
 greatest advantage, though he was proffered all
 the Kingdomes in the world, to doe it. Now,
 when Conscience tels a man, that in simplicity
 and godly sincerity, he hath had his conversa-
 tion in the World, it doth at once tell him that
 he hath walked in this World, just as Christ did.
 As he was, so art thou in this world, O my soule;
 which cannot but reioyce the heart, in the midst
 of the sharpest afflictions for Christs sake. Thy
 Saviour, O my soule, though God, yet was called a
 divell, nay *Belzebub* the Prince of divels; though
 temperate, yet called a drunkard and Wine-
 bibber, and companion to Publicans and Har-
 lots; though a man without guile, yet called a de-
 ceiver; though innocent, yet scoffed, imprisoned,
 condemned, and executed as a malefactor.
 'Tis just thus with thee O my soule: thou art
 studious to walke uprightly, and yet censured
 for an hypocrite: thou labourest to be better
 then any, and yet the World judges thee to be
 worse then any: thou labourest more for hu-
 mility and love, then for all the wealth in the
 World, and yet the World judges thee to be
 fuller of pride, and malice, then any man: thou
 dost not blow a Trumpet, when thou givest
 G 2 almes,

kissed. As we embrace, we are embraced. *I am my welbeloveds : and my welbeloved is mine.* An act of faith, and then an act of recompence, an act of joy. An act of trust, and then an act of return. *I am my welbeloveds, and my welbeloved is mine.* This is power working, and then glorifying its own work in the heart. Tis the souls going out to Christ like *Zachens*, and then bringing Christ home with him, and after this follow feasting and joy, and giving away any thing, whilst he is enjoy'd, that is all. Things work as they are in sight ; 'tis so in the body, 'tis so in the soul. Faith sets glorified Christ in sight ; glorified Christ in sight, makes glorious work in the heart: *In whom though now yee see him not, yet believing, yee rejoyce with joy unspeakable and full of glory.* — In whom though now yee see him not; that is, bodily: *but believing*, that is, seeing him soulely. As our soul vision is so in our soul state, for joy, or grief, shame or glory. If the soul can see light in the countenance of Christ, t'ath joy, glory, Heaven as full as it can hold ; if nothing but darknesse, t'ath nothing but grief. As yee believe, so is your Heaven or Hell.

With a note of admiration, I will conclude this point. Christians admire love that makes two Heavens for such as are worthy of none. Is it not enough that power works gloriously above, but must it work so here too? *I am not worthy, that thou shouldst come under my roof,* said he, and yet Christ was not then in state ; that Christ in state, in glory, should come under such a roof, such a rotten rooffe, as ours here is ! That light should arise in darknesse, took the Psalmist

much

much: That glorious light should arise in a poor dark soul, *glorious power* in a poor over-born sinful soul, should wonderfully affect us, and set us into holy admiration! *If a man die, shall he live again?* said *Job*. Thus much took him. How much more then should this, If a man live, shall he live again? If a man have a heaven here, shall he have another hereafter. If a man have glory here, shall he have glory again? shall he have glory upon glory? *be clothed upon?* Out of Heaven into Heaven? shall he passe from glory to glory by the spirit and power of God?

Christians, what a King of glory do we wait upon! Bed-chamber, Dining-room, glorious: yea, Hall and Out-rooms, which border upon Hell, *glorious*: power works gloriously in a house not made with hands; yea, and in a house made with hands, with earthen hands, and earthen feet. Power works gloriously in Earth, forms an earthen Vessel unto glory, forms glory unto it, in it; puts glory in the earthen Vessel, and then puts the earthen Vessel into glory. *The Queens Daughter is all glorious*, indeed: glorious within, without; glorious hereafter, yea, glorious here. It lies upon you Christians, admirably to speak and talk of these things. *They] shall speak of the glory of thy Kingdom, and talk of thy Power, &c. Psal. 145. 11.* Yea, not onely admire it, but draw comfort from it, according to all your fears & distresses. What can ye want, which *glorious power* cannot help you to? What is it that Heaven cannot make up? Suck this Honey-comb your selves, I onely can put it into your hand. Time calls me away.

The eighth SERMON.

COLLOSS. I. II.

Unto all patience.

YOU have a hint here, what is the state of a Christian in this World, a state that needs a bearing, a very bearing frame of heart: patience, all patience, if there be any thing more then this, and beyond this in long-suffering, it needs this too. *Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power [unto all patience] and long suffering with joyfulness.*

I take these two latter expressions to be *Synonimicall*, or very neer it; the one explaining the other. *All patience is long-suffering with joy: long-suffering with joy, is all patience.* What difference they have [I think] is *Secundum intra & extra*, and so I shall prosecute them. *All patience* notes the habit; *long-suffering with joy*, notes the exercise. The one notes the grace of patience in its formality; the other, in its use; in its highest use, as the other notes it, in its fullest *esse*, and strongest habit; for long suffering with joy, is patience in its highest and furthest use. Varying and redoubling of expression is to reach things throughly, and to hold them out most effectually; 'twill be our best way therefore (I judge) to go after the Holy Ghost step by step, word for word; in this way we shall tread surest, and be likely to finde most, touching the nature of this needfull grace of patience.

First

First therefore of *patience* ; then of all patience some thing shall be said, as God shall give assistance. *Patience is a holy behaviour in affliction* ; 'Tis *virtus versata circa adversa*. A grace that keeps man gracious, in all conditions ; good in a bad condition ; holy against all disadvantages of holinesses, within or without. Man is a creature since his fall full of wants, and as full of disquiet, and this turns all wants into sins and miseries : he is a creature beside the rule and his punishment for this, keeps him beside the rule through disquiet, and so renders man totally miserable; miserable without any felicity, or hope of felicity : this is the gall of bitterness, which patience takes away.

Definitio.

Patience takes away the sin of misery ; the misery of misery ; the afflicting strength of misery ; the sting and teeth of every affliction ; the malignity of every cup of trembling : the unhappiness of every sad condition, and makes a felicity in misery. 'Tis *rectitudo animi sub statu infelici*. A rectitude of mind, under a crosse & crooked condition : A heart moving by the word of God, when whipt by the hand of God. 'Tis *Jonah* praying in the Whales belly: 'tis Heaven made by divine art, in the belly of Hell ; this is patience.

Patience is a soul enjoying it self in every condition, when nothing else. There is more truth in the understanding, then power of truth in the heart ; therefore is man though very knowing, yet very unruly, when all suits not to his Will ; hence 'tis that the soul can hardly enjoy it selfe, when it cannot enjoy all it would. Dispossession of the creature, makes dispossession of the soul ;

*Anima in omni semitip-
satione.*

man

First

man in want, distracted; not *compos facultatis*, because not *compos facultatum*: not master of wit, because not master of wealth: the man is no man, because not such a man: the man hath nothing: because not such a thing: because no children, no life; as one dead; would be dead: let me have this or that, or let me dye: let me not have my soul, if I may not have this or that which my soul desires. This is vanity, grown up to maturity, and turned into vexation of spirit, which patience cures. Patience is a soul still enjoying it self, when nothing else. — *In your patience possesse your souls*. Patience helps a man to his soul again, that is to the enjoyment of his soul, and of himself, when all is gone. 'Tis a Christian *semper idem*, one that is the same in sanctity in the greatest poverty, as in the greatest prosperity: the same in all holy and sweet frame of spirit in the greatest affliction, as in the greatest advancement: 'tis one blessing, God giving, and doing the like, when taking away: 'tis one that has all, having God, when *Eſau* is coming to take away all. — *I have all*, saith *Iacob*, in a very sad condition.

*Essequa-
nimitas
sacra.*

Patience, 'tis an even Sea in all winds; a serene soul in all weathers. A threed even spun, with every wheel of providence: 'tis a soul above extreams; neither in excess, nor in defect; neither over-sensible, nor under-sensible of any affliction: neither without tears, nor without hope: neither murmuring, nor presuming: neither despising chastisement, nor fainting when corrected. Affected with all; cast down with nothing, Quiet, when toſs'd, very quiet, while
extreamly

Extreamly tofs'd, expecting his *salvation*, salvation from God when none can be had from man. Patience is not stupidity; an insensibility of soul under Gods hand, that's a block, a stone, a *Nabal*, not a patient man. Patience is not a mute drooping, a sullen, silent, soul-sinking, and consuming under adversity; this is despair; this is soul vitality spent; the marrow of the bones dried up. Patience is *virtus in medio*, a vertue betwene these two extreames; a soul sensible of one hand upon him, and of another under him; a soul sensible of a rod and a staffe; and so very quiet and very comfortable in a very low condition: *as having nothing, and yet possessing all things*: this is patience.

Patience, 'tis a divine power a holy subjugating power working in the soul, rendring all afflictions still born. God may say what he will, do what he will, and a patient soul charges God with nothing. If a reasonable creature be called dog, used like a dog, yet patience will not let this dog bark, nor flee out, but call him Lord, which calls her dog ——— and *shee said, truth Lord, the dogs eat of the crumbs, &c. Mat. 15. 17.* Patience gives sweet language for fowre, to God and man: *being reviled, reviles not again: being defamed, intreats.* God has the day in a patient soul: he may use his tongue or his hand how he will: a patient heart is dumbe, and answers not again. Passion saith, I doe well to be angry; but Patience saith, I do well to lay my hand on my mouth: *I have spoken once, but I will speak no more; tis thy doing.* Patience takes all well at Gods hands, she loves him so dearly.

Pati-

*Est vis
sacra
subju-
gans.*

Patience can give no ill language, how ill soever it goes with her friend, in whole house she dwells. Patience is a silent laying down all at Gods feet : 'tis a Christian proclaiming freedom to Christ, to do his owne will with him and his, in love. Patience was never known to put any other limitation upon the Almighty. Make me childlesse, make me husbandlesse, wivelesse ; penylesse, any thing, so thou do it in love to my soule, saith Patience. *'Tis the Lord, let him do what he will*, said that patient man. God has freedom proclaimed him, to do what he will with a patient man ; nothing shall be retorted upon him. Patience can be in honour, in disgrace, high or low at Gods dispose, and be contented. A patient man can live ; can die, and see advantage in either : to live, Christ ; to die, more Christ, the greatest gain of all : he can see gain in all that God does ; gain in sickness, gain in disgrace, gain in losse ; the greatest gain in the greatest losse ; soul-gain, in bodily-losse ; and therefore can patience speak of evils as good, of bitters as very sweet. Patience can kisse a rod ; kisse one that looks frowningly, which every one cannot do.

*Tis sacra
requies.*

Patience, 'tis a soul at rest. A soul daily at rest in God. Wives gone, substance gone, house plundered, *Ziklag* burnt, all mourning, many murmuring, ready to stoning and killing of *David*, and yet he makes up all in God and is at rest : this is patience. Patience, 'tis *Jacob* sleeping heartily upon a stone ; a heart at rest in hardships : 'tis a poor widow cheerfully giving and obeying a Prophet, though but a little Meal in the Barrell,

nor

nor but a little Oyl in the Cruse : 'tis one cheerfully going to eat her last provision and die : 'tis one quietly going up to take a view of *Canaan* and dye at the door making death, life; Christ, *Canaan*. Tis one going to sacrifice an only Son, with a — *God will provide* : Patience can speak no worse divinity, in the greatest strait : Tis one breathing out a soul at rest, in the face of the cruel'st misery ; *Not my will, but thy will be done*. If this Cup may not passe, let my blood passe ; if this cause cannot live, without I die, let me die : let money go, let limbs go, let heart-blood go, that Christ may stay, the Will of Christ may be done. *Let the will of the Lord be done*, this is a patient mans, *Amen*. All runs into this, *That patience, is a holy behaviour in affliction*.

In short, patience hath three things in it, 1. Passion subdued, 2. The soul quieted, 3. Expectation and waiting for good. A heart plain'd and made even with its condition, neither higher nor lower ; a heart still, and taking all well ; a heart expecting of, and waiting for what is needed, and Christ hath promised; this is a patient soul.

Patience presupposes a state of grace, a rich state of grace; for tis the cream of many virtues, the result of many graces combining: 'tis *virtutum virtus* a good child of good parents. Tis *virtus a virtutibus derivata**, a pleasant branch from many roots under ground. Patience presupposes an understanding full of the best light ; the soul is argued, not beaten quiet, as you beat a dog. *Thou speakest like a foolish woman*, saith he, *shall I receive this, and not that at Gods hand?* etc argues his soul quiet. Folly wrangles, — *Thou speakest*

Resumf-
tio,

I.

* There-
fore cal-
led vir-
tus im-
perfecta
by the
Mera-
list.

speakest like a foolish woman. A fool was never a patient person; he cannot argue with his heart, nor hold forth convincing, satisfying principles. Cleer divine light swayes, and keeps down all insurrection in a depraved state.

2.

Patience presupposes a divine understanding, and a *Divine will*; that is, a will subdued: where there is a stubborn will, there is not, nor cannot be a patient heart: every high thought is brought into subjection, ere the heart becomes patient. A proud heart resists, and is resisted; this is *duro durum*, flint to flint, fire to fire, man hot and God hot; no patience nor quiet in this soul, nor can be, High things made low; rough, plain; a proud heart, humble; then follows patience. Patience has a humble, meek mother, as any holy child in the soul; therefore is meekenesse (in a promiscuous way of speaking) put for patience, whereas it is indeed the mother of patience, according to that expression, — *Patient abiding of the meeke, &c.* A meek heart makes patient abiding the will of God. The will subdued, the heart humble, and the man will stay Gods leisure for any thing.

3.

Patience presupposes faith; *knowing that the tryall of your faith worketh patience*, saith the Apostle. Patience 'tis a Dove fleeing to and again in a deluge, and then resting the sole of her foot in the Ark: 'tis a spirit tossed and tumbled within it self, and then rests in Christ by faith, waiting what he will say and do; therefore 'tis said, *that tribulation worketh patience*; because tribulation when strong, worketh the soul off from all things here, and puts a man upon the exercise

cise of faith in Christ for relief, and so sets the soul to expect and wait for good from God, when it can find none any where else. Before tribulation comes, a man usually does not exercise faith, because he hath wherewithall within his own reach to bear up himself, and so thinks he is patient, when indeed he is not; but one calm, in a calm; whereas patience properly is one calm in a storm; a heart quiet, waiting and expecting good, when it can feel nothing but evill, nor see nothing but a naked Word of God.

Patience presupposes faith, and hope too; therefore is patience called, *patience of hope*: 'tis the result in the heart, of the exercise of both these; 'tis the blessing of faith and hope, 'tis the rest, quiet expectation, which the acting of these graces raise, wherby the soul is as if it had all it wants. As the soul in extremitie stayes it self upon truth, so 'tis beleeving; as it expects accomplishment of truth, so it rises to hope: as it waits for what it expects, so it rises higher, and this act of the soul is properly called patience. The soul at this height, is miserable, as if not miserable, as he useth the phrase about marriage, married as if not married, possessing as if not possessing; This soul doth not possess, and yet is as if he did possess, he hath little, and yet is as if he had all.

Patience presupposeth love, *charity suffereth long*, saith the Apostle, it indures all things; love represents every thing to view, lovely; all that God doth, and all that man doth: things thus represented, the heart cannot swell nor sowre it self with its owne thoughts: love renders every person and every thing fragrant, the veriest

4.

5.

dung-

dung-hill fragrant; when every thing smells sweet to the soul; the soul keeps it self sweet: *Love thinks no evil*; thinking evil, makes evil passion; as the soul is possessed of things, so it works within it self; as the heart works within it self, so it makes passion still, good or bad.

Use.

I have shewed you what patience is, and of what honourable house it comes; I will now make some use of all: I have (as you see) opened unto you a grace of graces, and in a time of times: a time wherein it was never more needed since we knew time: Christ is taking away our deer earthly enjoyments, servant from Master, childe from parents, husband from wife, soul from body; he is setting every relation a bleeding, one in the bosome of another: this calls loud for patience.

God seems to be dealing with *England* as with *Iob*; yea with every good man in *England* as with *Iob*; he seemes to be as one resolved to try us all to the quick, in Country, and City; to bring us to a morsell of Bread; to strip us of all (which God knows *England* hath abused) and to set us upon a dunghill, licking our wounds; to take away all, and then to set us in the want of all, to complain for pittie to them that will shew none, but poure Vinegar into our wounds, when we cry for mercy. Ah Christians! Will not such a condition call for patience? All in action now calls for nothing but patience; all in view now calls for nothing but patience: What a double miserable man is that, which lives in *England* now without patience! And yet Lord how much do I see it wanting every where!

I see an evill springing up in these evill Times, which will spoil us all, if God prevent it not, and that is impatience: activity degenerates into impitience; forward men can bear no check from providence, the most forward men, are become the most froward men: we set our mercies a day (which is more then we can answer) and becaule God doth not observe our limitation, we flee out in heart and tongue fearfully.

1. I am wearie of this City to hear the murmuring and impatience that is in it. The Country looks upon the City, the City looks upon the Parliament, the Parliament looks one upon another; Commons upon Lords, Lords upon Commons, all upon the King, and all look short of the King of Kings; this God saw right well, the fruit of it is upon us; we have lost much mercy this way, and now are at murmuring hard that we may lose all, relieving presence in the Wilderness, and *Canaan* too. Will murmuring and impatience ever bring us into that *Canaan* we hope for? Christians you fear the King, you fear the Cavaliers, you fear Commanders, you fear the Parliament, I tell you my heart, I am more afraid of you, of your unbelief, of your impatience, that this will prove a City spoiling, a Kingdom spoiling evill above all.

I will give you some principles of patience, respecting our state and condition, as things now stand and go with us, which is the best service (I think) I can do you, The first principle is this, *God takes time to administer to publike bodies.* *England* hath been a long time polluting her self, and this not with a low, but with a very high

hand, God is going gently to repeat over all, and will you not give him time? Tis but Justice to allow much time to one that is to repeat much. What hath been the course of the publike, for this twenty yeers together, you have forgotten: what hath been your course for twenty, forty, fifty yeers, for these hundred yeers ^{since} we and our fathers have enjoyed the Gospel, you have forgotten: how cold, how formalizing; how carelesse in your Families, how excessive and abusive of the creature, how bowell-lesse and mercilesse; who can reckon up how you have ordered your time and talents? God can, but he must have time: will you thrust much work upon God, and not give him time to go through with it? God takes time to administer Justice: he was forty yeers telling *Israel* how they grieved him by their murmuring: you would think much if he should be so long a telling *England* of her present murmuring. So afterwards he took eight yeers, and then eighteen yeers, and then twenty yeers, to tell *Israel* what they did under their Judges; and then seventy yeers to tell *Israel* what they did under their Kings: not any publike Body that I know of in the Scripture, but when God hath come to administer Justice to it, he hath taken some yeers to do it. Great houses that have many rooms in them, and these very foul, cannot be swept presently.

Secondly, as God takes time to administer Justice to publike Bodies, so he takes time to administer mercy to publike Bodies. The Tabernacle was long a raising; the first Temple which was to exceed that, longer; the second Temple which

which was to exceed that, much longer; the third, which is to exceed all, longest of all. The Tent, or Tabernacle, which was but small (I judge) was a year a making: the first Temple, seven yeers: the second Temple forty and six yeers. If this had any typicall signification (as I believe it had) it might well point at this, That a publike house for Christ, under the Gospell, would be long a raising; I mean, A Worship suitable to Gods Will, born up by publike Authority. According to what way God will dispencc himself, 'tis justice and duty to wait for him: I find not one hint in Scripture, of sudden raising this last house. You shew your selves ignorant men, you erre, not knowing the Scriptures, which are impatient because travelling *England* is not delivered in an hour, in a yeer. We have scarce travelled so long yet, as the Tabernacle was a building; sure I am, not so long as the first Temple was a building; there is no ground therefore of impatience, who have more noble things in hand. The Sun rises more and more; and so must up to the perfect day; this is the order that Christ will proceed in, to bring full mercy into the world: will you be impatient that the sun rises no faster? that he is not at the Meridian as soon as the day dawns?

A second Principle is this; *God doth sit for favours, and then* gives them: he doth hew stones for this last Temple. We are a generation low in spirit, and yet impatient that we have not high things. Do you give children & fooles what they desire? do you not instruct and discipline, and then give? yea and then too, what in your

wisdom you know good. We are utterly below high things, afraid of full mercies : is it not the fear of some, That the Puritan faction (as they call them) will be too strong ? the discipline of the Gospel too strict ? our spirits are base to God, & yet we wonder that noble things are not given unto us. Do not men play with their light ? prefer policy to truth ? Judge that Christ may weare a party coloured coat, mans wisdom mixt with Gods ? our own inventions and truth weaved together ? Tell me the best of you all, which are so impatient for reformation, which amongst you all doth deal so fairly with your light, and so simply with your conscience, as to render your selves capable of so great a good, as you seem to wrangle for ? I let things go how they will, you can stil shuffle along; is not a shuffling condition fit for a shuffling spirit ? God walks to you as you walk to him, and yet you are impatient : he cuts you out a condition with his Sword, suitable to your hearts ; he sees what consciences you have, that you stick at nothing, why should he remove what you can swallow ? Why should you think much to live upon Husks if you can eat Husks ? when I look upon that cold, neutrall, indifferent-spirit, that is, in English Christians generally; I wonder to heare any complain, that their best mercies are so long a coming. You impatiently talk of the Parliament, of the Army, of this and that, one is this and another is that, and therefore your misery lives, your mercies linger, and you die: I tell you, 'tis *Englands* neutrality, that hath brought her to this state, that keeps her in this state, that will spend her, and end her with bleeding, if any thing do.

A third principle is this, *Inferiour agents are all over-ruled*; Judas and his bloudy crew, move by a supreme Councell, they could not else have done to Christ what they did, and so Christ told them. Providence orders all agents and actions, to her own end; not to such an end, proposed by such a man: if love be in the brest of the first agent, 'tis no matter how all other agents act, you are to conclude they act well still, though you cannot see it: no heart could be impatient, or wrangle, if this principle were but well swallowed. Actions and agents may move very strangely in our view, and yet very orderly to the greatest good, as their supernaturall end. I would ask any impatient soul but this, What is in the brest of God respecting our cause? love, or not love? if you judge love to be in God to our cause, beleve that all agents & actions are ordered by it, and will bring forth in Gods time, a blessed end.

A fourth principle is this, *The imploymēt of War is a new thing to England*: a councell of War and a councell of State, are two things: Experience, makes Expertness; 'tis weaknesse to fall out with young beginners, because not expert: every one doth not know how to stick a Hog to the heart at one thrust, such must have the liberty to thrust again, and 'tis well if they kill him at last. Would you have men old Souldiers, which never saw the field before? let any Chronicle produce braver courage and carriage by young beginners, then ours have hitherto shewn, both at *Keynton* and *Brainford*? Passion makes us look over, what God doth by us and for us.

3.

4.

5. A fifth principle is this, *Gods providence makes no mans improvidence.* God we see is by so much the more watchfull, that we are unskilfull; Have we cause then to be impatient? did not Gods providence make up our improvidence at *Brainford*? Could so many else have been kept, from coming to the gates of your City, by so few? and so unarmed? our men wanted powder and shot, and our God shot off for them, and for us, or else certainly we had had their Cannon thundering about our Ears, for a Sabbath Peal. Many advantages we have given them, but they are curst to the adversary, they do not thrive with them; they labour in the very fire, and blait themselves upon the top of their best advantages. When God is All-sufficient, in such a redundant fence as this, to supply over-sight, by his watchfull eye, what soul dares to murmur?

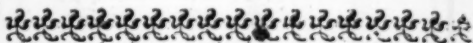
6. A sixth principle is this, *Impatience against called Instruments to any work, is impatience against G O D, and he will take it so:* Who is *Moses*? And who is *Aaron*? that you murmur against them? Who is the Parliament, that you are impatient against it? are they not a called Body by God? Are they not wise men, holy men, true-hearted, tender-hearted, and wish you as well as themselves, as well as you can wish your selves! Do they not use the best ability they have to do us service? Shall we require them for all cost and pains, with murmuring against them? God wil take this to heart, and charge you with murmuring against him.

7. Finally, God will so carry the great works of these

these last times, that all men shall acknowledge him, and not any man, which should make us patient that we can see man no more: that we can see man no more in our great works, a Finger of God is in it, that he may be seen and admired, as the Authour of all. The Prophet speaking (and certainly of this time) how this Generation should come down, saith, *Behold is it not of the Lord of Hosts that the people labour in the very Fire, &c. For the Earth (saith he) shall be filled with the knowledge of the Glory of the Lord, &c.* Not with the knowledge of the glory of any man. Men can do no more then they can; men shall do no more then they do, that you make not Gods of them: That you have no advantage to make a man a God, are you impatient? That God will not use whom you will, and how you will, therefore are you impatient? That God is not so wise as you, that he loves not himself, so well as you love him, therefore are you impatient?

Hab. 2.
13.

To conclude all, Let me ask you all one question more; Wherein hath God given you cause to be impatient, from the first of our troubles till now? For which of his good deeds do you stone him? (for truly impatience is no other but a stoning of Christ;) For his good deeds at *Hull*? For his good deeds at *Portsmouth*? For his good deeds at *Keynton*? What hath Christ done from the beginning of this Parliament to this day, to cast discouragement upon any soul? To cast any heart into a passion? Let his dealings bespeak you patient. I say no more.



The ninth Sermon.

COLO S. I. II.

—Unto [all patience, &c.



Concerning Patience, according to its formality, you have heard: concerning Patience now according to its graduality, I am to speak, according as the term here in my Text leads me,—all [Patience, &c. Patience is a quality, and qualities admit of intention and remission; a man may have lesse or more, much or *all Patience*, as the expression here is. As there is little faith and great faith, so there is little Patience and great Patience; *Could ye not watch with me one hour?* that was little Patience: *What if I will that he tarry till I come?* this is great Patience, *all patience*, as the term here is.

All Patience notes a totality, under a four-fold reference: it notes a totality in reference to subject, quality, condition, and time. All patience notes *totum subjecti*, the man all patient: that is, patient in tongue and in heart. 'Tis very usuall and very naturall to broken men to make false Coyn, to put silver and gold without, when the piece is brasse within, and not a quarter so much worth as it goes for. Many a piece is

pure

Pure mettall to look upon, and yet take away the guild, and but base mettall within : So many a man hath a painted patience, an outside patience, a Lip-patience, as there is a Lip-love ; very patient to talk with, and to look upon ; very cool in the lips, but burning within. There is a white powder, a wild-fire so ordered, as to make no great report ; so there is a pale impatience, that looks white in the face, but red, and bloody within ; it makes little report in the tongue, but yet is deadly wilde-fire. Man is a creature of art, he can carry fire in his bosome, and keep it from flaming forth ; he can hide coles under embers, and seem as if there were no fire ; he can make words as smooth as Oyl, when Warre and Hell are in the heart : he can forgive and not forget ; scorch and burn himself inwardly, and say nothing ; hurt no body, but kill himself : this is fretting ; 'tis not patience ; 'tis impatience within door, or behinde door ; 'tis discontented thoughts pent up ; heart passion stifled, which is deadly impatience, which all patience, & no lesse then this thorowly takes away.

All patience, is man all in good temper, *Vitall spirits and pulse* beating well, as well as lips and countenance looking well. All patience, 'tis all powers and parts, within and without, moving divinely and sweetly, when all in a distressed state : 'tis every faculty and organ in tune to move towards God, when scarce any at ease to move towards man : 'tis a man begging forgiveness in a storm of stones, for them that unjustly throw them.

As this expression notes *totum subiecti*, so it notes

notes *totum ipsius qualitatis*, a totality of the very quality, of the very grace of patience. All patience, that is patience, that is all patience: patience, without mixture of passion: pure patience; patience that is thorowout, what 'tis called; as far from all mixture, as 'tis possible for flesh and blood to be: patience so far from all impatience, that man sees none, God takes notice of none; patience so far from impatience, as to grieve no humane spirit nor Divine.

Mans vertues are mixt, yea his very graces are mixt; in some more mixt then in others; in some so much mixt, that grace is in a manner buried, and of no glosse to denominate the man, nor of no strength to make the man usefull. Mixture makes corruption, the more mixture the more corruption; 'tis hard to call some men gracious, or to say what they are fit for, passion is so strong, and patience so weak and low: such a man is a torment to himself, and all neer him. A Christian hath his glosse, and his use, as eminent in patience; this the Apostle eyed in this expression, therefore (I think) this may be his meaning, *All patience*, is patience all pure: the spirit of an Angel; free from all perturbation, above all scandall, very amiable and very usefull, fit for all service that God and his Gospel can call to.

All patience notes a totality, as in reference to quality, so in reference to condition, *totum periculi*, a heart so principled, so *compos sui*, master of himself: that no evill can make evil; not the greatest evill, the least impression of evill. *Evil is nomen magnitudinis & nomen multitudinis*,

nis,

nis, it speaks one, and it speaks many; it speaks a great one, and it speaks a great many: now all patience is such a height as holds its own fully, under all tryalls, under all the waves of God, without sinking, or shrinking: under evils mustered by God, weapon'd, marshal'd, brought on by God; set on, kept on, by God, made do execution by God, further then man, any man, can do; made to pierce the sides, and to pierce the heart—*The arrows of the Almighty are within me, saith Job, their poison drinks up my spirit, the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me, Job 6.* A body so shot, a soul so shot, to come off so bravely as Job doth there—*Let him not spare, for I have not concealed the words of the holy One.* Let man wound, God wound, God and man do what they will to soul and body, and not spare, yet God that wounds will I obey to the death; this is *all patience*: that is, patience that holds its own in all conditions.

All Patience, 'tis patience breathing her self forth, in the teeth of a Dog, and setters on: *Shemei* may bark. Standers by hisse; to make barking again, and yet all patience divinely turns off all, beholding God in a dead Dog, a righteous God, in an unrighteous man. All patience, 'tis a heart able to suppress all insurrection, from the naked consideration of God and sin; a heart that can quiet it self from the very rod; gather patience from the very twigs that whip and smart. All patience, 'tis a heart which from the shaper and shaping of affliction, can shape it self shoulders to bear it well: 'tis a heart so principled, as able to fetch out of every
cater,

midst of all troubles. 'Twas wonderfull to *Nebuchadnezzar*, to see the three children walke in the fiery furnace, as if they had beene walking in his stately walkes, because he was not aware that they had such a divine comfortable companion, as they had. So 'tis wonderfull to blind worldlings, to see men so chearefull in suffering for trifles in Religion (as they call them) and the reason is, because they know not that divine comforter, Conscience; which is continually within them, and unto them a feast. This is to walke sincerely, to be tender to obey all Gods will, and this Conscience tels the soule, in the midst of all the troubles he undergoes, from men of corrupt minds, and large Consciences; and this language of Conscience, being attended with the *glorious power of the Holy Ghost*; as a comforter, this soule cannot but reioyce, though bleeding upon Pillory, groaning upon a Racke, dying upon a Crosse, and condemned by wise men: for a foole, in standing out in such small matters.

Secondly, as this doctrine tels you blinde soules, the reason why some are so chearefull, under great troubles, for smal things; so it tels you that are a little more growne in hypocrisie and wickednesse, that your designe against the godly is frustrated. The maine designe of the divell and his children, in all the troubles he puts them to, is, to deprive them of all joy and comfort, and to make their being upon Earth Hell, which is a place without all consolation. Now this they can never doe, for as much as they cannot deprive them of the peace of conscience, and joy of the holy Ghost, which

which goe hand in hand, in an upright heart. True it is, if all the joy of the godly did consist in outward things, as wicked mens joy doth, then possibly they might serve the godly, as God will one day serve them, to wit, utterly strip them of all consolation; but the least part of an upright mans joy, consists in externall things; his prime joy is within, from Conscience, and the Holy Ghost which keepe company alwaies with it; and these two, all the wicked men upon earth, nor all the Devils in Hell, cannot suspend, much lesse silence from speaking comfort to an upright heart. Conscience will still say this within, that he which so walkes as before mentioned, is upright; when men and devils without, say, that he is an hypocrite, a dissembler, and not worthy to live. And the Holy Ghost will still second this language of Conscience, by speaking over the same againe: in such glorious expressions, and with such sweetned words, will the Spirit of God, beare witnesse with the spirit of man, that doe what you will to this man, he will still, notwithstanding all, rejoyce. Cast him into prison; nay cast him into a dungeon, a dirty dungeon, as *Jeremies* was; nay, cast him into a fiery Furnace; into a fiery Furnace heat seven times hotter then ordinary, *Give his backe to the smiters, and his cheekes to them that plucke off the haire, as the Prophet speaks, Isai. 50. 6.* doe what you will to him, yet you will never deprive him of his ioy. As long as breath is in his nostrils, Conscience will comfort him; and when this is gone, by thy cruelty, he will be in fulnesse of ioy; and in the fuller, by how much the more cruelty thou hast inflicted

inflicted on him. The joy of Conscience, is proportioned to what we suffer, for Conscience ; *as the afflictions of Christ, abound in us, so shall our joyes both here and hereafter.* And therefore doe not breake your sleepe and your braines, to plot mischief against the upright, for they will have more joy in suffering cruelty, then you can have in inflicting it. You doe but lessen your owne joy, to encrease theirs. The more terrible you are unto them, the more shal the testimony of Conscience be attended, with a glorious Spirit of consolation, which will make them rejoyce and be *exceeding glad* under all that you can inflict; and this wil exceedingly vex you.

Thirdly, this doctrine wil acquaint you with this truth. That if conscioufnesse of sincerity, wil lessen and sweeten troubles, by giving joy to the upright in the midst of them ; conscioufnesse of hypocrisie and unsoundnesse, must needs imbitter all troubles, and make them more pressing and piercing, upon you that are halters, and time-servers : this was that which *Jobs* friends drove at, in all their discourses with him, to bring him to sorrow doubly and trebly, for as much as all his outward miteries, were attended (as they conceived) with inward rottennesse : intimating, and that truly, that it must be so, and will be so with all hypocrites, when Conscience is once thoroughly awakened, to tell them of their unsoundnesse, under afflictions. What a terrible sting wil this be, to a man in poverty, when his Conscience shall tell him: Thou hast shuffled and shifted basely to get wealth, and yet by all thy unjust waies, thou canst scarce

scarce keep a cue above a begger. This blunt language of Conscience, will be such an addition of sorrow to poverty, as will exceed the pressure of poverty, when at greatest. What a sting will this be to a man in disgrace, when his Conscience shall tell him, Thou hast been a time-server; one that hast studied to humour and please men, more then God, that thou mightest get honour, and keep honour in the world, and yet for all thy dog-like fauning and flattering, thou stinkest in the nostrils of all, and art cast unto the dung-hill as unsavory salt? What a sting will this be to a man in sicknesse and death, when his Conscience shall tell him, that he hath been but an out-side Christian, all the dayes of his life; a man zealous about humane inventions and bodily exercises, to give God the out-side, and carelesse to worship God in spirit and truth? this close language of Conscience, will pain a man more then any sicknesse, or death can doe. This was that which stung *Balaam* worse then death, that his Conscience told him, he had been but an hypocrite all his life. This made *Indas* hang himself, after he had sold his master for money, for as much as his Conscience told him then strongly, that he had been but an hypocriticall follower of Christ, from the first to the last. And thus would every rotten wretch doe or worse, in every little trouble, if God should not admirably step in, and restrain, and hinder; so terrible is the sting of Conscience, when it testifies against a man, and such deep additions of griefe it bringeth to the soul in every calamity. *Sharp arrows and coals of*
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Juniper, Conscience shooteth and kindleth in the soule of man, in every trouble, when it testifieth against him, as the Psalmist useth the expressions, in relation to the hypocrite, the man concerning whom I here treat of, *Psal.* 120. 4.

Wherefore I would exhort you all that are unsound at heart, to beg upright hearts at the hands of God, that you may walk uprightly, and so have the testimony of Conscience with you, to rejoyce you in all your troubles. Your labour by hook and by crook to get wealth to stand by you, and to comfort you in troubles; and this will prove *gravel* in your bellies to torture you, as *Solomon* affirmeth, so far will it be from comforting you in troubles. The testimony of Conscience concerning your sincerity, is better then all the wealth in the world, to stand by you & to revive you in troubles. You flatter and fawn, turn and winde, shuffle and shift, to get great men to be your friends to stand by you, and to comfort you in troubles; and alas! their favour is a vapour; as unconstant as the winde. Walk sincerely, and Conscience will be a faithfull friend for you to the death; yea, after death in judgement. If thou hadst the favour of all the Princes in the world, yet could not they procure for thee a dram of comfort in sicknesse, in death, or in judgement: Conscience in all these times can, and will procure for thee, not onely drams, but flagons of consolation, if thou walke sincerely. Conscience is an incomparable friend, or foe, in sicknesse, death, and judgement.

The blindness and folly of man above all other creatures, is much to be wondred at; he hunts af-

ter things *which are not*, as *Solomon* saith, to be comforters to him, and takes no pains to procure that which will indeed bee stable and abiding comfort to him in all states. Riches, and honours, and friends, all the things of this life, they are called by *Solomon*, *things that are not*, because they are not such things as the blinde heart of man conceives them to be: he thinks they are sufficient to make him happy, and they are not so. The least fit of sicknesse will *non-plus* all these things, for reviving the soul. Vain man like that fool, thinks that he hath comfort enough for many yeers; that is, for all his life, when he hath great revenues in the world, and therefore sings a *requiem* to his soul, as if there needed no other thing, to the tranquillitie of the Spirit, thorowout a mans life, but worldly things; and alas! these things are not abiding, but still upon the wing, ready to flee from us; and if they were abiding, yet they are not satisfying; and therefore *Solomon* calls them, *Vanity and vexation* to the spirit. Conscience is a lasting friend, and a substantiall friend, to the spirit of man. A friend that hath such waters of life, which will revive the soul in the greatest extremities; and he is a fountain made by God, that will never wax dry; So that the soul, as long as she keeps her selfe sincere, shall never be without a spring of joy, boiling up day and night within her.

And this joy is not a low prised commodity, a thing little worth: 'tis called in Scripture, a *joy of the Lord*, such a joy of God, as is the *strength* of man. When the Levites had opened the Law unto the people, their Consciences were awakened, and

and smote them so, that they wept, saith the Text, and weakned and unfitted themselves, for the duties of the day; and therfore the Levites were saine to comfort them, that Conscience might take hold on something, to work joy in them, which is the strength of the soul, unto the duty of thanksgiving, which was the speciall work of that day. As an accusing condemning Conscience, secretly consumes spirits and strength of soule and body; and when attended onely with a legall spirit, begets such a horrid grieve in the heart of man, as unfits for the highest and noblest service of God: So an acquitting Conscience doth exhilarate and revive the soul; as being attended with an Evangelicall spirit, begets such a joy in the heart, as tunes and strengthens it unto all divine duties, especially unto thanksgiving which is the highest and hardest divine lesson that can bee played upon the heart of fallen man, but makes the sweetest melody in the ears of God, of all divine lessons committed to man to learn. If thou then wouldst be a sweet singer in *Israel*, a man apt and able to that which God most loves, walk so that Conscience may still be an acquitter within thee: if this accuse and condemn thee, 'twill put every string in thy heart out of tune; consume thy spirits, and make thy living a continuall dying, and yet death undesirable.

Secondly, divine joy is called in Scripture an exceeding joy. *I am exceeding joyfull in all our tribulations*, saith *Paul*, 2 Cor. 7. 4. The joy which Conscience gives to an upright man in all tribulations for uprightnesse sake, is an exceeding joy; a joy

joy that doth far more take, content, and delight the soul then any other joy can doe: so the Apostle explains this clause, by that which goes before it in the same verse. *I am [filled] with comfort* (saith he) *I am exceeding joyfull in all our tribulations.* Conscience gives such a joy to the soul in tribulations, that fills the soul with comfort, which is more then all the sweets and delights of this world can do. The delights of this life they doe not reach the soule of man; they reach no further then the externall senses, so far are they from filling the soul with comfort; and yet they do not fill nor satisfie these neither. for the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear with hearing, nor the nose with smelling, nor the tongue with tasting, nor the hand with handling. 'Tis but a tiring, and not a satisfying joy, that all outward things bring to the outward senses. That joy which only the externall senses bring into the soul, *Solomon* calls *madnesse*, as not worthy of the name of joy, because it reaches not the spirit of man as rationall, but as meerly sensitive. The joy which Conscience brings into the soul, doth not barely reach the soul, but it fills it, and satisfies it. *My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fardness, and my mouth shall praise thee with joyfull lips; when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate upon thee in the night-watches, Psal. 63. 5. 6.* If thou wilt live all thy daies, with the joy of a bruit, with a meer sensuall outside, spiritleffe, vain, vexing joy, then thou needst not take pains to order thy conversation sincerely, to get thy Conscience to testifie with thee; but if thou wouldst live all thy daies,

dayes in the joy of a man that bears the Image of God, then must thou strive so to walk, that Conscience may bear witness that thou art sincere.

The Scripture doth not stay here, but calls divine joy *everlasting*; which is an attribute so high, that it leads us necessarily to the originall, to wit, God, who is everlasting. As hell is a place of everlasting sorrow to all that be in it, because a river of brimstone from an everlasting fountain, runs to it; so heaven which is begun in joy upon earth, to wit, in the hearts of the upright, 'tis everlasting; because fresh streams of consolation continually come from an everlasting fountain, to wit, God. God alwayes seconds Conscience in him that is sincere, with such a *glorious power* as Saint Paul calls it, that though he be alwayes in sorrows for Christs sake, yet he is alwayes rejoycing: *As sorrowfull, yet alwayes rejoycing*, 2 Cor. 6. 10. You may many wayes cause sorrow to an upright man, but yet joy will live in ail, and outlive all his sorrows. You may set on fire the body of an upright man, and consume that; but you can never set on fire his joy and consume that. You may various wayes kill a sincere man, but you can no way kill his joy, as long as he holds fast his integrity. The joy that Conscience gives to the soule of man, upon testimony of his sincerity, 'twill live in fire, 'twill live in water, 'twill live in this land, 'twill live in any land; famine cannot starve it, plague cannot infect it, the sword cannot murder it, the rack cannot tear it; 'tis very healthy, 'tis long-lived, 'twill never die: 'tis from heaven, and will abide with the soul untill he come to Heaven; and then will be

be consummated, to give full solace to the soul for ever. If then thou wouldst have joy to sticke by thee, in health, in sicknesse, in peace, in war, in plenty, in famine, in honour, in disgrace, in liberty, in bonds, in life, in death, and eternally after death, walk so that thy Conscience may say that thou art simple and sincere in thy conversation.

The Scripture stayes not here, but calls divine joy *unspeakable and full of glory*. As that joy which iust men made perfect inherit, is beyond conception, so that it cannot enter into the heart of man to conceive of it, so that joy which Conscience gives to upright men in troubles, 'tis beyond expression: the tongue of man cannot fully expresse it. I doe not affirm that the heart of man cannot fully conceive it, though possibly it may be so. 'Tis joy unspeakably strong: stronger and more vehement, then the joy of worldlings, when corn and wine and oile increase; and yet 'tis hard to expresse how much joy an earthy heart hath, in great earthly increase. 'Tis joy unspeakably sweet, so that he which tastes of this joy, tastes no more sweetness in sensuall things, then in the white of an egge: 'tis sweeter then the honey or the honeycomb: that is, sweeter and more pleasing to the soul, then all the delights of this life, to the carnall heart; and yet 'tis hard to expresse how sweet and pleasing sensuall delights are, to the carnall heart of man.

'Tis joy unspeakably pure: as *David* saith, that *the fear of the Lord is clean*; so I may say, that the joy of the Lord, which he gives to man upon the testimony of Conscience concerning his sincerity,

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'tis clean ; that is, 'tis pure, unspeakably pure, and holy. What was said of the generation of Christ, that may be said of the generation of divine joy. *Who can declare his generation?* saith the Scripture of Christ ; so may I say, Who can declare the generation of divine joy ? 'Tis begotten in the heart, as Christ was in *Maries* womb, to wit, by the holy Ghost : 'tis shed abroad in the heart, by the holy Ghost : 'tis continually nourished and cherished by the holy Ghost. It fills the heart full of holy thoughts, the mouth full of holy words, and the hand full of holy deeds. It is immediately from heaven, and makes a man have his conversation in heaven, whilst on earth.

'Tis joy unspeakably precious : a dram of it is more worth then the world : a damned soul in hell would give ten thousand worlds, if there were so many, for the least drop of this cooling comforting liquor, to assuage his scorching torments but for a moment. It hath heaven in it, with which what can be compared for worth ? 'Tis *joy unspeakable and full of glory* ? The smiling face of God, which is more glorious then the Sun, may be seen in it, so diaphanous is it.

'Tis joy unspeakably lasting : whereas all other joyes die when man dies, if not long before ; this joy lives, as long as the soul and God lives. Labour then so to live, that Conscience may testify before God and you, that you are sincere, and so lead your souls into that unspeakable joy, which will make you unspeakably happy.

I have now a word or two to you which walk sincerely and uprightly in this world, and so I shut

up this point. If you do not yet finde ex; erimentally, the truth of this point; to wit, your Consciences causing you to rejoyce in the midst of your troubles, by a lively testifying your integrity to you, then by prayer plead your integrity to God, and intreat him so transcendently to second Conscience, with his glorious power which worketh in us, that your hearts may be revived under every pressure for pieties sake. Thus David was forced to do sometimes, to wit, plead his integrity, to finde the benefit of it in troubles; for God will be sought unto for every good thing, though we bee never so sincere. *Let integrity and uprightness preserve me: for I wait on thee, Psalm 25. 21.* David you see was put to it, to plead his integrity to God, to obtain the benefit of it in troubles; and thus must we still doe if we finde our hearts to droop in troubles, although we are conscious to our selves of our upright and innocent conversation. Say, Lord, thou knowest that I have walked uprightly concerning this thing and that, about which I am troubled, and therefore doe thou stand up in my heart, and second my Conscience by the Almighty power of thy holy Spirit, and make it speake peace so lively and so gloriously within me, that I may rejoyce in this tribulation for thy sake; that I may finde my integrity, as a cordiall to me, to keep me from fainting in my minde, and from stretching out tongue or hand to iniquity.

If you finde the comfortable testimony of Conscience reviving and rejoycing you in your troubles, then blesse God with David, that he

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hath enabled you so to walke in this wretched world, as to have the voice of conscience with you, that you are sincere. 'Tis of God, that we walk uprightly a moment: did not he stand by us, & watch over our deceitfull hearts, and uphold our goings in his paths, wee should shew our selves hypocriticall wretches in all our wayes. *God is my strength and power; and he maketh my way perfect, Psal. 28. 32.* When the lively testimony of Conscience, concerning *Dauids* integrity, had rejoyced, and raised his dull spirit, then he took wing, and made his soul mount up to heaven like an Eagle, to magnifie God which had beene such strength and power to him, as to make his way perfect, that is, sincere, and so capable of deliverance from his insulting enemies [*God*] *is my strength and power; and [he] maketh my way perfect.* *David* would not appropriate the praise, of his upright and innocent conversation to himself, as if he by his own wisdom, strength, and goodnesse, had made his way perfect and upright; he had through experience of the rottennesse of his own heart, and his aptnesse to declare it, if God had not been a speciall strength and aid unto him, in his conversation; and therefore doth he so humbly and imitably say, [*God*] *is my strength and power; and [he] maketh my way perfect, 2 Sam. 22. 33.* he inabled me so to walk, as to be capable of the accomplishment of his promises of defence against, and victory over ungodly men, and no wisdom, strength, or goodnesse of his own. Thus let us humbly doe, when we feele our hearts leap within us, as rejoyced by the secret testimony of

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Conscience, concerning the integrity of our carriage, in this or that matter of weight and triall that we were put upon; Thou wast my wisdom, strength, and power, O God, to guide and enable me to walke uprightly in such and such hazardous matters; my heart is deceitfull, and full of base feare, and if thou hadst not stood up as a mighty God in my weak spirit, I had been overborn with fleshly fears, and self-respects, to the wounding of my integrity, and thy Gospel and glory: blessed be thy name, that didst enable me to looke over all by ends, to thy glory; and to acquit my selfe, at the time of triall, answerable to my upright purpose and resolution: 'tis of thee to will and to doe good, and unto thee I give all the glory. This is the good way to have God stand by us still, and so mightily to guide us in all our wayes, that we shall keep faith and a good conscience to our grave, and so consequently our joy, which is the life of our lives. This was upright *Iob's* sweet carriage, as we may guesse by his language. *Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my soul: I would despise my life.* If I were for holioesse, as just men made perfect in glory, yet whilst a soul so holy, is in a body so diseased, I could not take any pleasure in my life. Thus to interpret these words, is to give us a hint and more, that *Iob* was extreemly overgone with impatience under Gods hand, which is the worst that can be said upon this place: I think there may be hinted this unto us (if the other be the maine scope) that *Iob* saw all the integrity & uprightness he had, or possibly could be had, was from God,

and that he had no reason to boast and magnifie himself, what ever his endowments were.

Lastly, if you finde by comfortable experience the truth of my doctrine, that the testimony of Conscience concerning your sincerity, causeth joy and rejoycing in our souls, then hang upon God for perseverance in a sincere way, that your joy may abide, and still more and more increase, as the light of the sun unto the perfect day. You have tasted of the sweetnesse of a sincere way, and therefore you should zealously follow God, to keep you on in it, as long as breath is in your nostrils. that you may never lose your grapes, your first-fruits of the holy Land, your taste of heaven, untill you come to the full fruition of it. 'Twas *Davids* prayer often (and let it be yours) though he were sincere, that *God would make his heart sound in his statutes.* There is much rottennesse in the best heart, and this will breake forth in a mans life, to the dishonour of God, and the wounding of his Conscience, and robbing of his joy, if he be not still with *David,* hanging upon God by prayer, for more and more uprightness, and for further and further cleansing of an unsound heart. Things that are apt to bend and become crooked, we are every foot rectifying and straightning them, and labouring to strengthen them, so that they may abide straight, and so be still fit for use and service. You know to what to apply this, if I should not tell you, to the heart of man. Flattery or violence will turn you aside from your sincere walking, if you doe not humbly seek God still with *David,* to make

make your heart sound in his statutes, and to be still with you, to uphold your steps in his paths. You will shipwracke Conscience, and all the peace and joy you have by it quickly, as *Peter* did, if you grow confident of your own strength, and doe not feare alwayes, and depend upon your God, for ability, to doe every thing uprightly. And therefore lean not to your own understanding, as *Solomon* said to his son, nor to any parts else you have, to steere your conversation, if you would maintaine the integritie and uprightness of it; but renounce all in your selves, and begge God to make you runne and not be weary, and to deliver you from backsliding in heart and life, to make you faithfull to the death, and to give you at last the crown of life.

This counsell that you may carefully follow, thinke on these two or three things. The peace and joy of a good Conscience, is better then the greatest preferment in the world, and the losse of it, is worse then the losse of thy life, in the cruellest way that man can invent. Thou wilt lose a little heaven, and create within thy heart a little hell, which will last till the marrow of thy bones be consumed, and thy moisture turned into the drought of summer, in the day that thou turnest aside from thy sincere course, and set'st Conscience against thee. The joy of an acquitting Conscience, is unspeakable and full of glory: and so the sorrow of an accusing condemning Conscience, is unspeakable and full of terrour.

'Tis sorrow unspeakable strong. What God said to the woman, after shee had turned aside

from the upright way of the Lord, that I may say of all the seed of the woman, when once they turn aside from their upright conversation. *Unto the woman God said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow, Gen. 3. 16.* Sorrow multiplied, is to have sorrow upon sorrow, as Paul useth the expression to the Philippians. As in child-bearing there is pang upon pang; and these returns of pangs, grow still stronger and stronger, till the womb be discharged of her burthen: so say I to you, in the day that you turn aside from upright walking, God will greatly multiply your sorrow; you shall have sorrow upon sorrow, pang upon pang by an accusing Conscience; and these pangs shall still be stronger and stronger, till you have humbled your souls throughly for your halting, and got your Consciences sprinkled with the Blood of Christ.

The sorrows which God distributeth to his, when they turn aside from sincere walking, they are sorrows fetcht from hell, and those sorrows, of all sorrows, are the strongest. *The sorrows of hell compassed me,* saith the Psalmist. To turn aside from uprightnesse, and holinesse, was the practice of the evil angels, for whom hell was first founded, and therefore God doth borrow some sorrows from thence, to punish such sins in his children, which carry a neer similitude to their sin: that *similes vitio*, may be *similes supplicio*; like in sinne, may be like in punishment. The sorrows which God inflicteth upon revolvers, for similitude sake, are called the sorrows of hell.

The sorrows of hell God distributeth in anger, as Job saith, *How oft is the candle of the wicked put*

out?

out? and oft commeth their destruction upon them: God distributeth sorrows in his anger, *Iob* 21. 17. So the sorrows which God distributeth to his people, when they turne aside from their sincere walking, are from God, as with an angry frowning vizard upon his face, as if he were indeed very angry, as indeed he is with the sin, though not with the person of the godly; for he hates sin in all, with a perfect hatred. The sorrows which God will distribute to thee by accusing Conscience, when thou haltest, shall be such as in which thou shalt see nothing. but the angry face of God, and this will make thee tremble and sorrow, as the Lord speaks of the Babylonians, *Ier.* 51. 29. as the very damned in hell doe, as one that feelth the very sorrows of hell to compasse thee. God looking angerly upon the earth. it trembleth, saith the Psalmist, *Psalm.* 104. 32. The earth is the vastest and gravest body under Heaven, and therefore least apt to shaking; and the foundations of it were laid, by Gods own immediate hand; and yet if God doe but look angerly upon this firme stable body, so transcendently founded, it trembleth: how much more then needs must man, which is but a little dust of that grave vast body, shake and tremble, when God as an angry God looks upon him?

Secondly, the sorrows of hell are such as principally torture the spirit. The fire which wee make, can onely burn and torture the bodies of men; because this onely of man is materiall: immaterials, as the souls of men are, our fire cannot fasten upon: but that strange fire, which God

Ignis scalis immaterialis non urit; inquit Philosoph.

hath kindled in hell, for all that disobey him, burns the souls of men, though immateriall substances. Nay, so strange is that fire, that it burns these immateriall substances most fiercely, as being the most sinfull part of man; for 'tis onely sin that pitches and defiles the soule, and makes it combustible, which otherwise would never burn, if all the fiery artists of hell did blow the bellows. Now, just such is that fire, which Conscience kindles upon the breach of integrity; to wit, a fire that principally tortures the spirit of man: a fire that burns inwardly, and consumes the marrow of the bones, and drinks up the spirits. The arrows which Conscience shoots in upon a man, upon the breach of sincerity, are such as pierce principally the spirit. As long as *Iob* was patient under Gods hand, he felt the arrows of the Almighty onely without him, as I may say, to wit, in his body, in his children and substance; but when he brake out and cursed his day, hee presently complains, that he felt the arrows of God within him, and that the poison of them did drink up his spirits, *Iob. 6. 4.* All that which before he felt without, was nothing to that which hee now felt within upon his spirit; as the torments which damned wretches shall suffer in their bodies, are nothing to those which shall continually flee up and down within their souls. So *David* after he had made breaches in his integritie, God filled his loins with loathsome diseases, but this was nothing to speake of; God made things strike into his heart, and then hee roared, *I am feeble and sore broken, I have roared by reason*

of

of the [*disquietnesse of my heart.*] David felt paines gather about his heart, and then he cries out. The heart is the marke that God principally aimes at, when a Christian hath turned aside from his upright course: other outward parts he may hit and deeply wound, but this is but to make holes into the heart, where the seate of unsoundnesse that principally offends him is. The fire which Conscience kindles, it may flash forth into the eyes, and tongue, and hands, and make a man looke fearefully, speake desperately, and doe bloodily against the body; but the heate of the fire is principally within, in the furnace, in the Spirit; 'tis but some sparkles and flashes onely, that you see come forth at the lower holes of the Furnace, which you behold in the eyes, words, and deeds of such men.

Thirdly, the sorrowes of Hell are torturing, but yet not such as utterly consume and end the soule. The fire which we make, let it fasten on never so hard a thing, yet it will consume it in length of time. But that strange fire that God hath kindled in Hell for all that disobey him, though it burne with the greatest fiercenesse that can be conceived, yet it never consumes the soules of those that are now burned in it; no nor yet the bodies that shal hereafter be burned in it. Damned soules are ever burning, and yet never burned; ever a consuming, and yet never consumed; and this addes infinitely to the misery of the damned. Even such is that fire which conscience kindles in the soule of man, upon the breach of integrity. 'Tis a fire that wil burne and torture the soule day and night, but never

ver consume it. *Heman* complains that this fire burnt so fiercely in his soule, that it *distracted* his spirit, but yet did not end his spirit. *While I suffer thy terror I am distracted, Psal. 88. 15.* The terrors that Conscience kindles in the spirit, wil racke the spirit, rend and teare limbe from limbe, faculties from faculty, and make the spirit mad with horreur and anguish, but yet for all this not put a period to the spirit: he shal be as susceptible and as sensible of tortures to day as yesterday, and to morrow as to day, and next weeke as this weeke, next yeere as this yeere, the last day of his life, as the first day they begun, if God doe not admirably intercept. Conscience hangs the soule in chaines alive upon the breach of integrity; and there lets the soule beate himselfe, and bite and gnaw himselfe, but yet cannot when he would end himselfe, and this makes every torture double. *O that I might have my request! and that God would grant me the thing that I long for!* Why, what *Job* dost thou long for? why, even that it would please God to destroy me: that he would yet loose his hand and cut me off. No *Job*, your spirit has hanged but a while, 'tis not dead yet, and therefore it shal not be cut downe. The things that *Iobs* soule refused to touch, were made by conscience his daily sorrowful meat, and this Gall and Wormwood fretted his guts, but did not strangle and end him; Conscience forc'd him every day, and every night to drinke a new draught, that kept his spirit in continual torture, and yet he could not get his soule out of this body, nor have it consumed in. The terrors that Conscience kindles, they are so terrible,

terrible, that they will make a man wish for death, may inflict death upon himselfe, and all to put an end unto them, and yet all will not doe, because these tortures fasten upon the spirit, but destroy not the spirit.

Finally, the sorrows of Hell, they are such as are not in the least measure pittied by God. Though the damned in Hell, be tormented with sulphurous flames, which is a very fierce fire; and though they cry and roare, howle and yell, shriek and gnash teeth continually, and all this in the hearing of God continually, which would stirre, nay, turne the bowels of any man, to heare but a moment; yet it stirres not God a jot, though he hath heard these dolorous cries so many hundred yeeres, to give them the least good word, or good looke. So that sorrow which Conscience raises in the soule, upon the breach of sincerity, God seems not to pittie in the least measure, for a long time. Though the spirit of man be rackt, tortured, and affrighted even unto distraction, yet God wil not so much as afford a good looke to the soule. Though he pray and fast, and consume himselfe with fasting, yet not any beams of light and love, that the revoking soule shal see in the countenance of God, to take hold on, and to comfort himselfe by. Hence 'tis that the Psalmist complains of God and his mercy as cleane gone. *Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? is his mercy cleane gone for ever? doth his promise faile for evermore? Psal. 77. 7, 8.* Nay, many times God serves back-sliding Christians, as he served the Israelites of old, to wit, increases their sorrow, when

when they are in earnest suit for release and comfort ; so farre he is from pittying of them : and as *Ioseph* carried himselfe to his brethren; in stead of pittying them in their want, he spake affrightingly to them, and told them that they were spies, and so put them in feare of the losse of their lives. Just thus for a time doth God usually carry himselfe to revolting Christians : he is so farre from pitying them, notwithstanding all their prayers, that he calls them dogs, and speakes roughly to them, and puts them in feare of the losse of their best lives, and seems resolved to proceed against them as his enemies, begge and cry as long as they wil. *Iob* points at this, where he saith, *Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy ? Iob 13. 24.* And is not this Hell indeed, to be in soule-misery, and to have no compassion from God ? To be pittied and condoled by a mans friend, though he be not able to helpe him, we take it as a great mercy, and moderation of misery ; *Iob* would so have accounted it. But when such as we take for friends, doe not onely forbear to pity, but set themselves against us in our misery, and adde to our afflictions ; this makes misery unspeakably miserable, and a lively Emblem of Hel indeed: But I goe no further this way.

Secondly, as the sorrow which conscience causeth upon the breach of sincerity, is unspeakably strong, no other in a manner but the torments of Hel; so 'tis oftentimes unspeakably sudden. As the Wind raises hideous stormes and tempests at Sea on a sudden, that endanger the drowning of all: So conscience, when once the soule hath turned
aside

aside to crooked waies, oft times of a sudden raises hideous storms and tempests in the soule, which addes exceedingly to the torture. Horreur and terrour breaking forth suddenly, affrights more by far, then if it came with warning. The fire that Conscience kindles in the soule, is like the setting a fire of Gun-powder, very sudden, as 'tis very fierce. After once a breach is made upon sincerity, conscience laies traines of wild-fire and blows up all a mans joy on an instant, & sets on fire the soule, & then lets in Legions of such spirits whose dwelling is only in fire, to keep garrison against all promises of good to this soule, and then the soule becomes like *Pashur*, *feare round about*: the face of God terrible; the face of friends terrible; the thought of sicknesse, death; and the thought of death, Hell; & the thought of Hel, as at the door, and unavoidable. As the Arrowes which God wil shoor, against the enemies of his Church, shal goe forth as lightning, *Ze. 9.14.* so the Arrows which God shoots by Conscience, against such as turn aside to evil waies, they go forth oft times as lightning, very sudden, and very swift. Sometimes when a sinne like *Belshazzar* is in the very act of sin, conscience writes down a mans doom in his heart, and in such legible Letters, that the sinner cannot choose but read and tremble. When a sinner is taking pleasure in unrighteousnesse, of a sudden Conscience breaks forth into thundring and lightning in the soule, and the sinner is as one descending quicke into Hel. And *[immediately, while he yet spake]* the Cock crew, and the Lord looked backe upon Peter, saith the Text, *Luke 22.60.* On a sudden, while Peter was in

in the very act of denying, a Cocke crew within, to wit, conscience that made *Peters* spirit die within him. Once and twice *Peter* denied Christ, and Christ did not awaken conscience, and set him at him, to pull him by the throat; but the third time, *immediately while he yet spake*, Conscience like a Lyon ranne upon his soule, and made him beleieve that he would be a tormentor to him, as he is to the damned, before the time. Sometime Conscience may let a man alone, after he is turned aside from sincere walking, but if the soule still goe on, of a sudden Conscience will breake forth, into thundering and lightning, so fiercely as he did in *Peters* soule, on whom if Christ had not looked backe, *Peter* would have gone neere, to have served himselfe as *Indas*, after he had betrayed his Master.

To conclude all, This I am sure, O sincere soule, that as Conscience will make thee know to thy comfort, that 'tis a sweet thing faithfully and sincerely to serve God; so Conscience wil make thee know to thy griefe, that it is an evil and a bitter thing, to turne away from the good way of the Lord. Having therefore now set good and evil before thee, make a wise choice. Choose rather to undergoe any thing, that man or diuel can invent, that thou maiest still enjoy the peace and joy of a good Conscience, then to have the greatest honour this world wil afford, and shipwracke sincerity, and so lie liable to the lash of an evil conscience.

The

The fourth Sermon.

2 COR. I. 12.

For our rejoycing is this, the testimony of our Conscience, that in simplicitie and godly sinceritie, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-wards, but especially amongst you.



HE fourth and last proposition, which now according to order & method, comes to be handled, is this, *That there be speciall times and occasions, for the declaration of sincerity, which ought to be observed, and answerably to declare and shew our selves.*

The Church of the Corinthians was very vitious in doctrine and manners, as we may plainly see by many expressions of S. Paul, in his first and second Epistles to them. They were a contentious, and buffed up, one against another. They had itching eares, and carnally gloried in men; one was for c Paul, and another for Apollo, and another for Cephas. They were voluptuous, that before they came to the Lords Supper, one was hungry, another ddrunken, in the House of God. They were followers of heathenish fashions, as in their apparel and meates, so in their haire, wearing it so long that very e nature, and the custome of the Church of Christ condemned it. They were fluperstitious

d 1 Cor. 1

11.

b 1 Cor.

4.6.

c 1 Cor.

1.12.

d 1 Cor.

11.31.

e 1 Cor.

11.14,16.

f 1 Cor.

10.25.

g 1 Cor.
10:14.

h 1 Cor. 6

9, 10, 11.

i 1 Cor.

10, 9, 10.

k 2 Cor.

12, 20.

l 2 Cor.

4, 2.

m 2 Cor.

13, 10.

n 1 Cor.

5, 6.

o 1 Cor. 15

34.

perfitious, g idolatrous, h adulterous, fornicatours, abusers of themselves with man-kind, theeves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners, murmurers, i tempters of Christ, k backbiters, whisperers, raisers of tumults, and what not? This grosse wickednesse made *Paul* to stirre up the grace of God in him, and to use great boldnesse of speech, towards this Church, as himselfe saith, 2 Cor. 7. 4. with all plainnesse and powerfullnesse, reproving their sins, and making manifest the truth, to every mans conscience, in the sight of God. They were growne to loose, that *Paul* was forc'd to use such sharp and home expressions, and with such Majesty, as you shal not finde him the like, to any Church. Twice in one Epistle useth he this upbraiding expression, n *I speake this to your shame*, which not once throughout all his Epistles, to any other Church, doth he use the like upbraiding language. And then delivering his reproofs, with such a transcendent Majesty. *Moreover I call God for a record upon my soule, that to spare you I came not as yet to Corinth*, 2 Cor. 1. 23. As if he would dart their soules through, with such an holy feare of God, that their loose hearts for ever after, might stand in awe and sinne not. Thus as this Church above all other, gave *S. Paul*, speciall occasion for the declaration of his uprightnesse and sincerity, so answerably he courageously applied himselfe unto them, which is the meaning of this expression in my text, *but more abundantly to you-ward, or, specially among you.*

Paul had dealt sincerely with all other Churches, but other Churches were not so openly wicked, and

and therefore there needed not, that he should use such open majesticall contestation with them. This Church of *Corinth*, was very openly and wilfully wicked, and therefore *Paul* answerably opened his mouth against them. *O Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged: ye are not straightened in us, but ye are straightened in your own bowels, 1 Cor. 6. 11.* We have said enough and done enough (as if the Apostle had said) to worke upon your prophane hearts, and to turne you from your prophane lives, but yet your affections are straightened and clogg'd, that you come not off so readily, to follow our holy instructions as you should. The point you see to very naturally raised, *That there be speciall times and occasions, for the declaration of sincerity, which we ought to observe, and answerably to declare, and shew our selves in our places.*

Speciall times and occasions for the declaration of sincerity, are either *personall, domesticall, sociall, or nationall.* Personall occasions, which require sincerity after a speciall manner to be declared, are when a man is strongly assaulted by the world, the flesh or the devil, to sinne against God; or else strongly hindred in seeking the glory of God, and the good of his Church. When *Simon* the forcerer saw that through laying on of the Apostles hands the holy Ghost was given, he offered *Peter* money to impart his skill unto him, and so to have made him a merchant of the holy Ghost, for gaine; then was a speciall personall occasion from the world, for *Peter* to declare his sincerity, that he abhorred all unjust waies to get wealth, and that he was not mercenary in his Ministry, as the World might

suppose; which he wisely considered, and answerably carried himselfe. Peter stood up, and courageously said to Simon the sorcerer, *Thy money perish with thee; because that thou thoughtst the gift of God may be purchased with money, thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter; for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickednesse, and pray God if perhaps the thoughts of thy heart may be forgiven thee; for I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitternesse and bonds of iniquity,* Act. 8. 18, 19, 20, 21. When Samuel was thought hardly of, the people being strongly set to have a King, as other Nations had, not liking their government by Judges; then was a speciall personall occasion from the world, for Samuel to declare his integrity, that he had walked faithfully, as Gods Vicegerent over them, and had given them no just occasion, to wax weary of this way of government, and so consequently that they did evil to desire a King. And Samuel said to all Israel, *behold here I am, witnesse against me before the Lord, and before his Anointed: Whose Oxe have I taken? Whose Assse have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hands have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? & I will restore it you,* 1 Sam. 12. 3. When Bariesus withstood Paul in his ministry, that he could not doe that good he would upon Sergius Paulus, then was speciall personall occasion from the world for Paul to declare his sinceritie, that he strongly abhorred flatterers and time-servers, and dearely loved the glory of God, and the winning of soules unto him; which he wisely considered, and answerably with courage declared him.

himselfe. Then Saul who also is called Paul, filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him, and said, O full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the diuel, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right waies of the Lord? *Act. 13. 9, 10.*

When Paul was strongly set upon by his owne flesh; when the law in his members, rebelled against the law of his mind, and carried him captive to the law of sinne; then was a speciall personall occasion from the flesh, for Paul to declare his sincerity, that he loved God more then his lusts, and to please him, rather then to enjoy the pleasures of sinne; which he wisely considered, and answerably declared himselfe. *But I keepe under my body, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any meanes when I have preached to others, I my selfe should be a cast away, 1 Cor. 9. 27.* This is after a speciall manner to declare sincerity indeed, when a man courageously fights against himselfe, so far-forth as sinful, & opposite to God. The lusts of the heart, are the enemies of a mans owne house, which are the worst enemies of all, and therefore when these begin to warre and rebell, against that holy light which is in our minds, then is a speciall time indeed for a man to stirre up the grace of God in him, and to declare his uprightnesse for God, whose throne the heart of man ought to be, or else God wil give up the heart to the power and dominion of sinne, and then the soule is undone for ever. This Paul wisely considered, and therefore when he felt this pricke in the flesh, after a speciall manner molest him, he still after a speciall manner declared his uprightnesse in wrestling against it,

2 Cor. 12.
7.

that so he might subdue his flesh, which otherwise would have subdued his spirit, and outed Christ of his prime Hold; and Saint Paul of his prime happinesse.

3.

When the diuel tempted Christ, to cast downe himselfe from the top of a steepe place, and to fall downe and worship him, and so to decline his Father utterly; then was a speciall *personall occasion from the diuel*, for Christ to declare his uprightnesse; that he prized every tittle of his fathers wil, above all this World, and all the honours and pleasures in it. Which Christ wisely considered, and answerably with much courage and resolution declared himselfe. *Then said Jesus unto him, get thee hence Satan, for it is writen, that thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him onely thou shalt serve, Math. 4. 10.* So when the Serpent subtilly got into one of the followers of Christ, and prayed him to pity and spare himself, from that painefull worke on which the glory of God, and the salvation of man so much depended; then was a speciall *personall occasion from the diuel*, for Christ againe to declare his sincerity, that he more regarded the glory of God, and the good of man, then his owne life, though his life were worth a thousand of ours; which he thoroughly considered and answerably declared himselfe; *Get thee behind me: Satan, Mark 8. 33.* So when the serpent subtilly set upon our first parents, to draw them to eate of the forbidden fruit, then was a speciall *personall occasion from the diuel*, for them to have declared their uprightnesse; that they would not disobey their God in the least point, though

though they might have been made Gods themselves, to doe it : which because they did not seriously consider, and answerably carry themselves, they lost the confirmation of their happy being, and plunged themselves, and allus their posterity, into unspeakable misery.

Domesticall occasions which require sincerity after a special manner to be declared, are; when in Family relations, good or evil, after a speciall manner is to be conversant about. When *Ely's* sonnes abused their high calling, by a prophane conversation; then was a special domestical occasion, for *Ely* to declare his sincerity, to God and man, that he loved the glory of God above the lives of his sonnet; which because he did not seriously observe and answerably carry himselfe, but passed over a special occasion, with an ordinary reproofe, therefore God fell out with him, and punished him as one that esteemed and loved his sonnes, more then God. When God commanded *Abraham* to sacrifice his onely sonne *Isaac*, then was a special domestical occasion for *Abraham* to declare his sincerity, that to obey the Wil of God, was dearer to him then the life of his onely sonne; which he seriously considered and answerably carried himselfe; and God then openly confessed *Abraham* to be upright. For now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy sonne, thine only sonne from me, Gen. 22. 12. When *Jobs* wife bid *Job* in his extremity to curse God and die, then was a special domestical occasion for *Iob* to declare his sincerity, that he served God for nought; which *Iob* seri-

2.

ously considered, and answerably carried himselfe towards his wife. *Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh, what? shall we receive good at the hands of God, and not evil?* Job 2.10. So when David Sauls sonne had a special advantage against Saul, and might have slaine him, but would not, because he was the Lords Anointed; then was a speciall domestical occasion for David, to declare his uprightnesse to God and to Saul, that he was an obedient son to Saul, and desired not the life or Kingdom of his father, but to live in love & peace with him; which David wisely considered, and tooke this speciall occasion to declare his integritie to Saul; and this done so seasonably, his words were to Saul like Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver, which made him to confesse David, to be more righteous then himselfe, 1 Sam. 24. 17. So likewise when God met Moses in an Inne, and commanded him to circumcise his sonne, to which bloody ordinance Zipporah was so averse, or otherwise he should lose his life, then was a speciall domestical occasion for Moses to declare his uprightnesse to God and to his wife, that he regarded more to please God, then to please his wife; which Moses seriously considered, and answerably with courage carried himselfe, or else he had assuredly smarted severely.

3. *Sociall or Symmachicall occasions* and times, for the declaration of sincerity after a special manner, are, when good or evil are more then ordinarily conversant about in relation to such or such a Society or Corporation. When Joab that bloody man, would have destroyed Abel that ancient

City,

City, because of *Sheba* a seditious man which fled thither, then was a speciall symmachical occasion for that wise woman to declare her uprightnesse, for her owne good, and for the good of that City whereof she was a member; that she was none of them that made strife and contention against *David*, nor that City in which she lived; which she wisely considered, and answerably with wisdom and courage carried her selfe. *I am one of them that are peaceable in I'rael; thou seekest to destroy a City, and a mother in I'rael; why wilt thou swallow up the inheritance of the Lord, 2 Sam. 20. 19.* When *Judas* one of that Honourable Society, plotted mischief against Christ, the Master of that Company, then was a speciall time for Christ to declare his integrity, that the World might know that Christ had given *Judas* no just cause, thus treacherously to behave himselfe, but had every way so carried himselfe towards him, as might have been enough, to have wonne any mans heart for ever to him. Christ made him as his equal; his familiar friend; he did eate of his bread; he had favours in common with the rest of the Apostles; and yet played the traytor to Christ: this, Christ upon this occasion (you know) declared. When the Holy Ghost after a transcendent manner, fell upon the Apostles, that they spake with divers tongues, some sonnes of *Belial* mocked them and said, *These men are full of new Wine*; then was a speciall symmachical occasion for *Peter* to declare his uprightnesse for the glory of God, and for the credit of that honourable society of which he was: to declare to all the World, that they were not drunken

drunken, as the blind worldlings conceived, but Transcendently filled with the Holy Ghost; which the Apostle seriously considered, and answerably with much courage he declared himselfe. *But Peter standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice and said, Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this knowne unto you, and hearken unto my words; for these are not drunken as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third houre of the day; but this is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel, &c. Act. 2. 14, 15, 16.*

4.

Nationall occasions and times for the declaration of sincerity after a speciall manner, are, when good or evil after a speciall manner is conversant about, in relation, not to this or that particular person, but to the whole Nation. When bloody Pharaoh would have destroyed all Israel, then was a speciall National occasion, for Moses and the rest of the Worthies of the Lord, to declare their sincerity, for the glory of God, and the good of his Church; which Moses seriously considered and answerably with much courage carried himselfe towards Pharaoh, upon all occasions, though a King: he told him his owne, and held him strictly to Gods termes; and though he shuffled and shifted, and went forth and backe as a halting rotten Prince, to worke Moses about to decline a little from Gods Wil, yet so sincerely did Moses declare himselfe to God and all his people, that he would not yeeld to Pharaoh a hoose, nor sweare from a tittle of what God bid him to stand for. So when Balaam would have cursed all Israel for wealth and

Exod. 10.
14.

and honour, then was a speciall Nationall occasion, for all Israelites indeed, to declare their sincerity, by wrestling with the Lord by prayer, to countermine all his inchantments, which they seriously considered, & answerably with much unweariednes doubtlesse did, or else doubtlesse God would never have withstood *Balaam* in that admirable manner as he did, and have forced him still to blesse, when he meant to curse. When *Israel* committed whoredom with the daughters of *Moab*, and joyned themselves unto *Baal-Peor*, and the anger of the Lord kindled, threatening to destroy all, then was a speciall Nationall occasion for *Moses*, to declare his sincerity, that hee loved the glory of God above the lives of his brethren, which he seriously considered and answerably with much courage did. And *Moses* said unto the Judges of *Israel*, slay yee every one his men, that were joyned to *Baal-Peor*, Numb. 25. 5. So when *Israel* had made them a molten calfe in the absence of *Moses*, and God would have destroyed them all at once, and have made *Moses* a great nation if he would have let him alone in his way, then was a speciall nationall occasion indeed for *Moses* to declare his uprightness, that he loved the lives of his brethren above all honours and preferments this world could afford him and that he loved the glory of God (which would have been much blemished by the heathen, if he had destroyed *Israel*) more then his own life, which he seriously considered, and answerably declared himself. And *Moses* returned unto the Lord, and said, *Oh this people have committed a great sin, &c. Yet now if thou wilt forgive*

forgive their sin, and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book, Exod. 32. 31. 32. When Israel halted between God and *Baal*, making a mixture of divine worship and idolatrous together, one to colour the other, that poison might be swallowed without scrupling, to the speedy and unsensible perdition of souls, then was a speciall nationall occasion for the Prophets of the Lord to declare their uprightness, in crying against halting, not fearing man who shalbe made as grasse; which *Elijah* seriously considered, and answerably with much courage carried himself. *And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, how long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him: and the people answered him not a word.* When *Azariah* the Prophet told *Asa* and all *Juda*, that their halting in Gods worship, was the cause of all their troubles, and that if they did zealously return to that purity of divine worship, which God required, and shake off mans inventions, it should go well with them, and that God would still be with them for good, and not for hurt, as he had been; then was a speciall nationall occasion for that people to declare their sincerity; their love to the purity of Gods ordinances, more then to their own inventions; which they seriously considered, and answerably with much zeal and life did. *And they entered into a covenant, to seek the Lord God of their fathers, with all their heart, with all their soul: that whosoever would not seek the Lord God of Israel, should be put to death, whether small or great, whether man or woman, 2 Chr. 15. 12, 13.* So when *Haman* had plotted the death of all the Jews, then was a speciall

speciall nationall occasion for *Mordecai* and *Esther*, to declare their sincerity, for the glory of God and the good of his Church; which they seriously observed, and answerably with much courage carried themselves. Then *Esther* had them return *Mordecai* this answer, *Goe gather together all the Jewes that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three dayes, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise, and so will I goe in unto the King, which is not according to the Law, and if I perish, I perish, Esther 4. 15. 16.*

The reasons why God in the course of his providence, brings about speciall occasions for the declaration of sincerity, are these; First, that the world and the Devil may see, that his people are indeed sincere. Speciall occasions of triall, are like *Nebuchadnezzars fiery furnace*, heat seven times hotter then ordinary, which will thorowly discover gold from drosse. These made known *Iobs* sincerity so universally, that all mouthes were stopt, which strangely thought and spoke of *Job* before. 'Tis very common with the Devil and his children, to account and call Gods people hypocrites; such as do not serve God for nought, but follow Christ for loaves, and professe Religion for their own ends. Now God to convince these censorious wretches, that judge amisse of the generation of the just, brings his children as 'twere upon the stage, in the open view of all, and puts them upon speciall trials of their uprightnesse; he sets them such tasks of doing or suffering, that shall stretch every vein in their bodies, and convince all beholders, yea, the Devil and all his children, that they

they are sincere; & make them confesse with *Saul*, that they are more righteous then themselves. As there be some stars, which by divine inslucation are invisible to us, and others visible, to declare the glory of God, and to be of use for man : So those stars which God hath placed in the lesser world, to wit, the soul of man, some of them God would have to be as it were invisible to the world; God would have a Christian modestly, and humbly to conceal as much as may be, many gifts, but others again God would they should declare them as much as may be, to his glory and the good of others, as love, and sincerity, that they may sparkle in the eyes of all the world, as glorious beams of the divine Image. Now man being too backward to this work voluntarily, God makes and fits occasions and times for the very purpose, that shall sift a man throughly, and sound his heart to the bottom, and turn his inside outward, and so declare his sincerity or hypocrisie to all the world. As God knows who are his; so he will have the Devil and his children to know also who are his; that they may walk as self-condemned wretches, as *Saul* did, for persecuting of them. Now, to effect this, this is the thing God does, *viz.* he makes bitter pills for his children to swallow, heave burdens for his children to bear, such as no unsound heart would touch, with one of his fingers; he heats furnaces seven times hotter then ordinary, and throws his children into them; one thing or other God so orders, that shall put his people to it, to see what mettall they be made of; that shall anatomise every string in their hearts, so that

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the Devil, and all his children, to their conviction and torment, shall read sincerity written in their hearts, with capitall letters.

The second reason why God in the course of his providence, brings about speciall occasions for the declaration of sincerity, is, that his own glory may thereby be greatly advanced. Speciall cures, they winne a name to a Physitian, more then then the ordinary cures of seven yeers practice : likewise speciall victories, winne their prime agents more honour, then all the ordinary warfare of their whole life : So God by carrying his people through speciall occasions of triall magnifies the glory of his power, wisdom, and love, more then a thousand ordinary passages of his providence towards them. What a name for power, God wonne to himselfe, in the heart of *Daniel*, and the three children, for enabling them with such courage, to stop the mouthes of Lions, and to quench the violence of fire ; to expose themselves to the mercy of lions and fire ; rather then to wrong their Conscience. This doubtlesse made them more to sing of the power and goodnesse of the Lord, then all the passages of his providence towards them, in the whole course of their lives before. Some skilfull Physitians will make their men swallow this or that strong poison, that they may shew their skill before multitudes in curing of them, to winne them a name : So God hee puts his people to great plunges oft-times, that hee may winne them a name for ever in their hearts, and in the hearts of all beholders,

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for wisdom, power, and mercy in carrying them sweetly thorow all, without making shipwrack of faith and a good Conscience. This know, that 'tis Gods great work in this world to advance his own Name, and to make it great to the ends of the earth: now, amongst the many notable wayes, he hath to magnifie his Name, this is one, and not the meanest, to wit, to put his people upon speciall occasions, of the triall of their sincerity. and by these, such an art hath God to advance his own honour, that he wins a world of hearts to himselfe at once, that will be so many living trumpets to sound forth the praise of his greatnesse and goodnesse, from generation to generation.

Thirdly, God by his providence brings about speciall occasions for the trial of sincerity, to adde to the torture of the Devil and his children. Great trials of the godly, put the Devil and his children in hope of their utter ruine. When *Haman* had prevailed so far, as to get a bloody decree against the Jews, he then joyed exceedingly, as one that promised himselfe their utter ruine: now God stepping in between, and on a sudden turning this triall of *Mordecai's* to his advantage, and to *Hamans* disadvantage, to his honour, and *Hamans* disgrace, no man can tell, nor hardly conceive, how this added to *Hamans* torture. God hath admirable wayes, to make wicked men gnash their teeth, before they come to Hell; and amongst the many admirable wayes, which God hath for this end, this is not one of the meanest, to put the wicked into a kinde of hope, of having their will upon the godly, by giving the godly in part (for
trials

trials sake) into their hands, and then on a sudden, snatching them farther out of their power, then ever they were before, and making them engines of the downfall of the wicked. This hath made many a proud malicious wretch, hang himselfe, stab himselfe, poison himselfe, to with himselfe any where, so he were but out of the sight and talke of them that fear God.

Lastly, God in the course of his providence, brings about speciall occasions, for the triall and discovery of sincerity, that so the joy of the upright may be augmented, in this life, and in the life to come. Speciall trials of sincerity, sincerely gone through, they procure joy unspeakable and full of glory in this life; and they work about joy unconceivable and full of glory in the life to come. There is joy in this life for the godly, and joy unspeakable and full of glory. So there is a reward in Heaven for the godly, and a great reward, as Christ useth the epithete, *Matth. 5. 12.* Now, unspeakable joy, God gives to them that undergoe unspeakable trials of their integrity; hee gives full flaggons of consolation, to such as have been sorely shot at, as the expression is used concerning *Ioseph, Gen. 49. 23.* and yet have kept faithfull to their God. So the great reward in Heaven, is kept for them, that undergoe great trials on earth, and yet hold fast their integrity. As Princes have their wayes to advance men to great honour, honourably; to wit, by putting them upon some notable hard and difficult service, and if they acquit themselves well and faithfully in it, then to confer great honor upon them, not otherwise:

wise. So the King of Kings, he hath his honourable wayes, to advance mean Christians to great spirituall dignities, here & hereafter: and amongst many others this is one, namely, to put them upon speciall trials, and difficult taskes and services, that shall put every nerve and sinew to it; and discharging themselves well and faithfully in these, then he puts a long white robe upon them, and palms in their hands, great spirituall dignities, that so they may be known to all, to be such as came out of great tribulation, as Iohn saith; *Rev. 7. 14.*

This doctrine findeth fault with two sorts of persons, viz. such as of wilfulnesse and such as of weaknesse, neglect and passe by speciall times and occasions, for the declaration of sincerity.

Men wilfully passe by speciall times and occasions, for the declaration of sincerity, when they shut their eyes, and will not take notice of such times; out of some self-respect. The Prophet *Isaiah* speaks of this sort of men, where he saith, *Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet [will he not] learn righteousness, in the Land of uprightnesse [will he deal unjustly] [and will not] behold the Majesty of the Lord. Lord when thy hand is lifted up [they will not see:] but they shall see, and be ashamed for their envie at the people, &c. Isa. 26. 10, 11.* God gave speciall times to this generation of men, to mend their manners, and to declare uprightnesse in their conversation to his glory, but though this speciall favour were shewed them, yet would they not, so much as set about, to learne righteousness, to acquaint their deluded Conscience with what was right, and to be practised by them. God in a very
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majesticall manner lifted up his hand against them to crosse and curse them in their corrupt wayes, and all to this end, that they should behold it, and take shame to themselves, and break off from their unrighteous courses, and they wilfully shut their eyes, that they might not behold the Majesty of God against them. God gave them (of his rich favour) speciall times and opportunities, to declare uprightnesse, and they made them speciall times and occasions to declare their pride and rottennesse. There is an iron sinew in the will of men naturally, and therefore let God give never so fair opportunities and occasions to them, to shew themselves for him and for his righteous wayes, yet they will not bow and stoop unto it. This iron sinew was in the neck of *Saul*, and therefore God called his sinne, in not slaying all the *Amalekites*, when he gave him a speciall opportunity thereunto, *stubbornnesse and Rebellion*. God saw more into *Sauls* sinne then he, or many of us could imagine. He looked upon *Sauls* will, in sparing *Agag*, when he might have killed him; and God saw that *Sauls* will was resolutely set to doe this, what ever hypocriticall plea he made for himselfe, and what expresse charge he had to the contrary. God gave to *Saul* there, a speciall opportunity wherein to declare his sincerity, and he as a self-willed wretch, made it a special time wherein to declare his hypocrisie, to his utter disgrace and ruine both of soul and body.

Pride and malice are the cause, why men wilfully passe by speciall times, for the declaration of sincerity. God gave to *Herod* a special time

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wherein to declare sinceritie, by causing that promised branch, to spring out of the root of *Iesse* in his time, which root was thought to have been quite dead. Here was such an opportunity given *Herod*, to declare his love to Christ, by protecting and countenancing of him, as was given to no Ruler before him; and he out of pride and malice, as one that could not endure, that there should be any other King of the Jews besides himself, thought with all his policy and might to kill him: so far was he from using all his regall power, to protect and fence this choice branch from spoilers. God gave likewise to the learned Scribes & Pharisees, speciall occasions for the declaration of sincerity, by causing him that was the wisdom of God to converse amongst them, and to speak as never man spake, and to do those things which never man did; that so they (as *Iohn* the Baptist, according to what they had heard with their ears, and seen with their eyes, might magnifie him, and labour as Gods faithfull Ministers in their place, to bring all men to beleve on him, and follow him; and they out of pride and malice, used all their craft and might, to crush him in the shell, to nip him in the very bud, to cloud his glorious sun, as soon as risen, that none might see his light and walk in it.

Such wretches as these, who wilfully shun speciall times and occasions for the declaration of sincerity, must be told this, That their sin is very great, and answerable shall be their punishment, unlesse they repent. That your sin is great, appears by the example of *Saul*, sinning in this very kinde. God gave him a speciall occasion, to de-

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clare his sincerity to him; when he gave all the *Amalekites* into his hands; he wilfully taking his own course, and pleasing his own humour, you know how God calls this sin, viz. *Stubbornesse*; *Rebellion*; rebellion parallel to *Witchcraft*, *Rejecting the Word of the Lord*. God will no otherwise account your sinne, who now wilfully passe by occasions and opportunities of declaring your sincerity to him. He will account your practice, *stubbornesse*: and did any man ever stout it out with God, and prosper? He will account your practise *Rebellion*: and did ever any man play the rebell against God, that he was not hanged and quartered? He will account your practice a *rejecting of his Word*: and for this God will certainly reject you. You know well what heaue punishment God inflicted upon *Saul* for this sinne: he stript him of his Kingdom, nay, he stript him of the holy Ghost, ten thousand times more worth then his Kingdome, and gave him up to an evil spirit, to be vexed and whorried headlong into great sins, and great miseries; and according to this proceeding of diuine iustice, must you looke to be dealt withall. God offers you now golden opportunities, to declare your sincerity to him, by killing all *Amalekites*, every sin in your souls, which are more abominable to him, then ever was the *Amalekites*, and to the killing of all, he promisseth you his assisting grace, as he caused his victorious arme to go along with *Saul*; and if now you wilfully spare some one *Agag*, some fat of the Kine, some sine that bring you in pleasure and profit, look for

Pares
peccato,
supplicio
pares.

*Est debili-
tas culpa-
bilis, sicut
excusabi-
lis.*

*Ignorantia
norma, ig-
norantia
culpabilis,
est.*

Sauls sauce to such sweet meats. God will take his Spirit utterly from you, and give you up to your own hearts lusts, to commit wickednes with greedines, to the aggravation of your condemnation.

Secondly, the doctrine in hand, findes fault with such as passe by speciall occasions and times, for the declaration of sincerity, out of weaknesse: under this head four sorts of persons are to be re-proved. First, such as through ignorance passe by speciall times and occasions, for the declaration of sincerity. Many men in place have often by the providence of God, speciall occasions and times put upon them, for the declaration of their sincere love to Christ and his members, but being ignorant of what is indeed sincerity, to wit, what is indeed right, and the thing to be stood for, do nothing. shew themselves neuters, or else doe as the most doe: Some though they have a long time lived in the light, and should be able to distinguish between light and darknesse, yet through a carelesse improvement of the light, and resting in customs, know not what is indeed the exact will of God to be stood for; and therefore when they are by the providence of God, brought upon the stage, to set their seale to Gods truth, they as fools, say and do they know not what.

Others there are, who though not ignorant of what is indeed right and good, but yet ignorant of the danger which may ensue upon the neglect of any opportunity for the declaration of sincerity, passe by one speciall occasion, and promise to themselves another, and God peradventure presently proceeds against them in a strict way

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of iudicature, to the deserting of their souls, and never brings about such a golden opportunity more unto them, wherein to shew themselves so admirably for him. Salomon points at this where he saith, *Because to every purpose there is time and judgement: therefore the misery of man is great upon him, Eccles. 8.6.* The misery of man is great upon him indeed, that is either ignorant of judgement (1) of what is right, and sincere; or that is ignorant of time: that is of such speciall and fit opportunities as God offers to man, for the performing of, and standing for, what is right and good. You that are ignorant of judgement; of what is right to be done or suffered, you will by the example of others be drawn to stand against right, in stead of standing for it, as did the ignorant multitude against Christ, concerning whom the Apostle speaks thus, *That had they known it, they had not crucified the Lord of glory, 1 Cor. 2. 8.* The ignorant Jews not knowing judgement, were by the example of the learned scribes and Pharisees, drawn to stand against Christ, in stead of standing for him, and so pulled the guilt of innocent blood upon them, which is not yet washed off.

You that are ignorant of time; of the speciall occasions and times, which God in the course of his providence brings about, for the declaration of sincerity, and of the dangers which ensue thereupon, must be told this, That you will open great gaps unto evil ere you are aware. Old *Ely* not taking that speciall occasion given him, to declare his sinceritie, by a due punishment upon his sonnes, they grew horribly wicked.

and Gods wrath grew quickly unquenchably hot.

Secondly, let me tell you this, That you blindly passe by the choicest times of your life, to advance your owne happinesse both here and hereafter. *Phinehas* for taking that speciall time which God gave him, to declare his sincere love to him, won a great deal of honour to himselfe and posterity. And so likewise *Levi*, who took hold of that speciall time that God gave him to declare his sincerity; *Who said to his father and to his mother, I have not seen him, neither did he acknowledge his brethren; nor knew his own children, Deut. 33. 9.* won unspeakable honour. So likewise *Abraham* in taking that speciall time which God gave him, to try the sincerity of his love in putting on to sacrifice his onely son, won incomparable dignity.

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Secondly such as through carnall fear passe by speciall occasions for the declaration of sincerity, are here to be blamed. This I think was *Pilates* case. God gave a speciall time unto him, for the declaration of sincere love to Christ, when Christ was brought as a malefactor before him, and yet nothing worthy of death or of bonds could be found against him. But *Pilate*, out of fear to displease the Jews, passed by this golden opportunity, and passed sentence upon the innocent. This was *Peters* weaknesse. God gave him a speciall occasion for the declaration of sincere love to Christ, when the damsell so hardly put him to it, and yet he out of fear, passed by this golden opportunity, and denied Christ with all vehemency, which he should with all boldnesse and fervour then have confessed.

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Such as these may doe well to keep these two Scriptures still in their minds: *I, even I am he that comforteth you, Who art thou that shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man that shall be made as grasse: ? Isa. 51. 12. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my father which is in Heaven, Mat. 10. 33.*

Secondly, such may do well also to consider this, That they will brand their name with everling reproach; rob God of more honour, through this cowardlinesse, then their souls are worth, though rated above all this world; and rob themselves of the spirit of glory, which rests transcendently upon suffering Christians, as *Peter* speaks, *1 Pet. 4. 14.*

Thirdly, such as passe by speciall times for the declaration of sincerity, through carnall perswasion, are here to be blamed. The man of God which cryed against the altar at *Bethel*, was faulty in this kinde. God gave to him a speciall occasion to declare his sincere love to him, when that old Prophet perswaded him to doe contrary to his Commission; but he being overborn with the smooth language of the Prophet, returned back with him, and did eat bread and drink water, contrary to the expresse command of God. How the man of God was handled for this, such shall doe well to think of, that are apt to have an ear open to carnall counsell and perswasion, to be turned thereby from taking hold of speciall times for the declaration of sincerity. Three examples more there be, which are most worthy of the mens consideration, which would have this weakness cured in them. The first is the example of

Joseph in his carriage to his *Mistress*; He would not admit of discourse with her, nor stand to hearken to her unclean perswasions, but speedily breaks away from her company and counsell both. The second is, the example of *Paul*, that would not consult with flesh and blood, when he was to take hold of speciall occasions and times, for the declaration of his sincere love to *Christ*. The third is the example of *Christ* himself, in his carriage to *Peter*, who when he sought to perswade him to spare himself, said, *Get thee behind me Satan*.

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Fourthly, such as out of carnall pity, passe by speciall occasions for the declaration of sincerity, are by this doctrine to be blamed. Good old *Ely* was faulty in this kinde. Out of pity to his sonnes he forbore to doe that which he should have done, to have declared his sincere love to the glory of God. Let such as are faulty in this kinde, thinke on *Elies* misery to humble them; and on these divine examples following to reformethem. Think on *Levi*, who sheathed his sword in the bowels of his brethren; nay, he knew not his father nor mother, no, nor the children of his loins, that he might declare his sincere love to the glory of God, when opportunity was offered. Think on *Gideon*, who threw down the Altar of his father, that he might declare his sincere love to God, when he called him hereunto. Think on *Aa's* dethroning his mother, and stamping her idols to powder, 2 *Chron.* 15. 16. And on *Solomons* denying the request of his good mother *Bathscha*, when she requested a bad thing, to wit, *Abisbag* the Shunamite, for
Adonijah,

Adonijah, which was given to lie in *David's* bosome in his old age to keepe him warme, and to cherish him. All these worthies were not swayed by foolish pitty; but looked over all relations, to obey the Wil of God, and to declare their sincere love to him, upon all occasions offered.

Wherefore, The second and last use of this doctrine, shal be for exhortation. Seeing there be special times and occasions for the declaration of sincerity, and that many have broken thorough all impediments, to take hold of them, let us also strive thus to doe. Two things I would exhort you to, to observe such times; and secondly, to take fast hold of them. Seeing there be speciall times for the declaration of sincerity, let us give all diligence to observe, when they are by God offered to us. Shut not your eyes against such times; nor through ignorance, and carelesnesse overlooke such timer.

But how should I know special times and occasions for the declaration of sincerity?

I answer, by these three things. First, by the dependency of Gods glory and thine owne eternal good, upon times, occasions, and actions. If the glory of God, and thine owne eternal good depend much upon the doing or suffering of this or that thing; so depend, that if not performed, both Gods glory and thine owne peace fall to the ground; this is a special time and occasion for the declaration of sincerity; and therefore observe it.

Secondly, by strong internall motions and movings to this or that duty, together with the hand of God externally in a special manner, by mercies

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mercies and corrections seconding. 'Tis said (you know) that the Spirit of the Lord moved *Sampson* at times in the Campe of *Dan*. That is, God after a speciall manner stirred him up now and then to that great worke of fighting with the Philistins, to which he had assigned him. So likewise now, the Spirit of God doth at times move mens hearts, after a powerfull & speciall manner, to this duty or that, to the mortification of this lust or that; & seconds this strong internall motion, by such mercies and corrections, as may most suitably tend to further this motion, and spurre on backward man, to the performance of this duty. This is a speciall time for the declaration of sincerity; observe it. *Balaam* (doubtlesse) had speciall motions and internall stirrings not to goe about to curse *Israel*, and the Angel of the Lord without seconding to hinder him; and yet for all this sword within, and sword without, he would on. You that will doe as he did, must looke to fare as he did. So on the other hand, *Mordecai* (doubtlesse) had strong internall motions and stirrings to labour for the good of the Jewes, and the downfall of proud *Haman*; and the providence of God externally, after a speciall manner seconding, which he observed, and answerably moved in this golden opportunity, and so wonne much honour to God, to himself, and good to his Church.

3.

Thirdly, by the Word of God. The Word of God is so full and perfect; that it plainly sets before every man that studies it, what is of weight to be done and what is of moment not to be done. It sets forth things to be done, or not to be done, with

with all the circumstances about them, which makes them of more speciall consequence, or lesse. So that if a man looke upon an action or occasion by the word of God, he shall presently be able to see, of what consequence the thing is, and how answerably he is to move in and about it, whether with more or lesse care and diligence. Hence 'tis that Christ willed those which he urged to embrace him, to search the Scriptures concerning him; intimating that there they should see, of what consequence this worke was, of embracing Christ, and following him.

Secondly, as I would have you to take notice, so I would have you to take hold of speciall times and occasions for the declaration of sincerity. When you have espied these golden opportunities, fasten upon them.

But how should I take hold of these golden opportunities aright?

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I answer, the taking hold of these golden opportunities aright, consists in these three things, viz. That a man when such times are brought about to him by the providence of God, set himselfe, first, speedily; and secondly, thoroughly, to answer them; and thirdly, that he goe about all in the strength of Christ. First, a man that would take hold aright of speciall times and occasions for the declaration of sincerity, must be speedy in this worke. Time, we say, carries for no man. And opportunity is the extract, and quintessence of time, and farre more gliding. Opportunity let slip, possibly a man may have never such another, though he should live an hundred yeeres. Hence 'tis that Christ

Christ speaks so dolefully to *Ierusalem*, which had slipt her opportunity, *O Ierusalem, Ierusalem, if thou hast known in this thy day, the things that belong to thy peace! but now they are hidden from thine eyes.*

Secondly, as you must set your selves speedily, so you must set your selves throughly to this work; if you would take hold of these golden opportunities aright. That is, you must set your selves to declare sincerity, answerable to the occasions and speciall opportunity which God offereth. For this is to take hold of these precious opportunities aright, to wit, when speciall occasions for the declaration of sincerity present themselves, after a speciall manner, to declare our sincerity in them. When a speciall occasion of this kind was offered to *Paul* by *Peters* Judaizing, you know with what courage and spirit *Paul* declared himselfe answerable to the occasion. *To whom I give place, not for a moment. Whom I wish stood to the face, for he was to be blamed, Gal. 2.* And *Moses* likewise though a very meeke, quiet, and patient spirited man, yet when a speciall occasion for the declaration of his sincerity was offered, by *Aaron* and the peoples making a Calse, with what a Lyon-like courage did he shew himselfe? And old *Ely* because he did shew himselfe thus to declare his sincerity, when his sonnes oft provoked God, to wit, answerable to that speciall occasion offered, you know what construction God made of his mild cold carriage, in that urgent weighty matter, betweene God and his sonnes.

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Thirdly, a man that would declare sincerity aright in all occasions offered thereunto, must set
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about this worke in the strength of Christ, and not in any strength of his owne. *I will goe in the strength of the Lord God: I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine onely, Psalm. 71. 16. I will goe in the strength of the Lord God, &c.* That is, in every designe, and in every businesse I will depend wholly upon the ayd and assistance of God, and upon no strength of my owne. Thus we know *David* went against *Goliath*, when he would declare his sincere love to God, whom *Goliath* blasphemed. Thus must we doe when ever we set up upon any opportunity, wherein to declare our sincere love to God, or else we shall doe as *Peter*, deny Christ, in stead of standing for him answerably to the occasion offered.

Now, that what hath been said touching this point, of taking hold of golden opportunities offered, for the declaration of sincerity, you may all observe and follow, thinke on these two or three things. God calls for it: Conscience calls for it: Church and State calls for it: Soule and body will else severely smart for it. First, thinke on this, God calls for this at our hands, that we should declare sincerity according to the speciall occasions calling thereunto. *Gather your selves together, &c.* saith the Lord to the disobedient Jewes, and in them to us, before the decree come forth, before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you. *Seeke ye the Lord all ye meeke of the earth, seeke righteousness, seeke meeknesse: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lords anger, Zeph. 2. 1, 2, 3.* A speciall time was offered, wherein to shew themselves for God and for good, & God called upon them carefully

fully to take it, as they tendered their temporall and eternall good.

God calls us now to the declaration of sincerity, as by his word, so by his workes, both of mercy and justice. God hath loaded us with mercies and corrections of all sorts, and all for this end, that we should declare our sincere love to him, answerable to all opportunities offered hereunto. *Many a time* (as the Psalmist saith) *hath he turned away his anger,* and hath not made a full end of us, when we have highly provoked him thereunto, and all for this end, that we should declare our sincere love to him, answerable to all opportunities offered thereunto. To the language of the Lord by the Prophet *Amos* I may fitly here allude. God hath withholden the raine from us, when there have beene but three moneths to the harvest: God hath caused it to raine upon one Shire and County, and not upon another: God hath smitten us with blasting and Mildew; and all this to bring us to declare a sincere love to him, according to all opportunities offered; and yet we are backward hereunto. God hath smitten us with the pestilence againe and againe; and with the Sword hath he threatned us againe and againe, and all this to bring us on to declare a sincere love to him, according to all occasions offered; and yet we are backward hereunto. *Therefore thus will I doe unto thee,* saith the Lord to Israel, *and because I will doe thus, prepare to meet the Lord thy God, O Israel, Amos 4.* So say I to you, forasmuch as all the milde meanes which God hath hitherto used are not effectuell for this end, to bring us to declare our sincere love

to him, according to all opportunities offered, therefore we must expect that God will take some severe course with us for the time to come; and because we are to expect this at the hands of God, let us prepare to meet the Lord our God. Let every one of us repent of our halting and time-serving past, and for the time to come let us let our selves to declare a sincere love to God, according to all occasions offered.

Conscience calls us hereunto, as wel as God. Special occasions for the declaration of sincerity, now so frequently and so openly shew themselves, that every mans conscience tels him, that he should shew himselfe a great deale more then he doth, for God, his King, and Countrey. As in the night the Owles and the Bats looke abroad: so in these darke sad daies of sin and wickednesse, the eyes of Owles and Bats, the eyes of wicked and secure sinners, begin to open, and their consciences begin to tell them, that they should doe something more now then they have done, for God, and the good of this Church and Kingdome.

Church and state calls for it. They both now with one dolefull voice cry out to us in the language of the Psalmist: *Who will rise up for me against the evill doers? or who will stand up for me against the workers of iniquity? Psal. 94. 16. They know not, neither will they understand, they walke on in darknesse: all the foundations of the earth are out of course. Psal. 82. 5:*

Finally, soule and body wil else severely smart for it, if we doe not now step in, to take hold of all opportunities for the declaration of sincerity.

Cutse

Curse ye Meroz (said the Angel of the Lord) *curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof: because they came not to the help of the Lord against the mighty, Iudg 5 23.* This curse may all such expect who now come not forth, to declare their sincere love to Christ and his truth, upon all just occasions calling thereunto. The soules of such Christians as now neglect and put by these golden opportunities, of declaring their sincere love to Christ, will be given up to lukewarmnesse, coldnesse, deadnesse, hardnesse, and some to obstinatenesse, and maliciousnesse against God, and all goodnesse: which are all soule-curses with a witnesse. And such bodies as have in them such cursed soules as these, you may assure your selves, they shal meet with misery enough first or last. Paul intimates something to this purpose, where he saith, *At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsooke me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge, 2 Tim. 4. 16.* Such as take not hold of speciall times and occasions for the declaration of their sincere love to Christ and his truth, may feare that sad things will be first or last, laid to their charge; such as shal make body and soule shake. Let us therefore all, as we love our bodies and soules, and as we professe love to Christ, which should be dearer to us then our bodies or soules: take hold of all opportunities for the declaration of sincerity. As God brings about speciall times and occasions for this end, so let every one of us after a speciall manner take hold of them that we may after a speciall manner be honoured of God, both here and hereafter. *Dixi.*

Trinuni Dei gloria.

